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Sir John Johnson, by
Maj.-Gen. J. Watts de Peyster





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SMITHSONIAN DEPOSIT

SIR JOHN JOHNSON,

THE FIRST

AMERICAN-BORN BARONET

AN ADDRESS

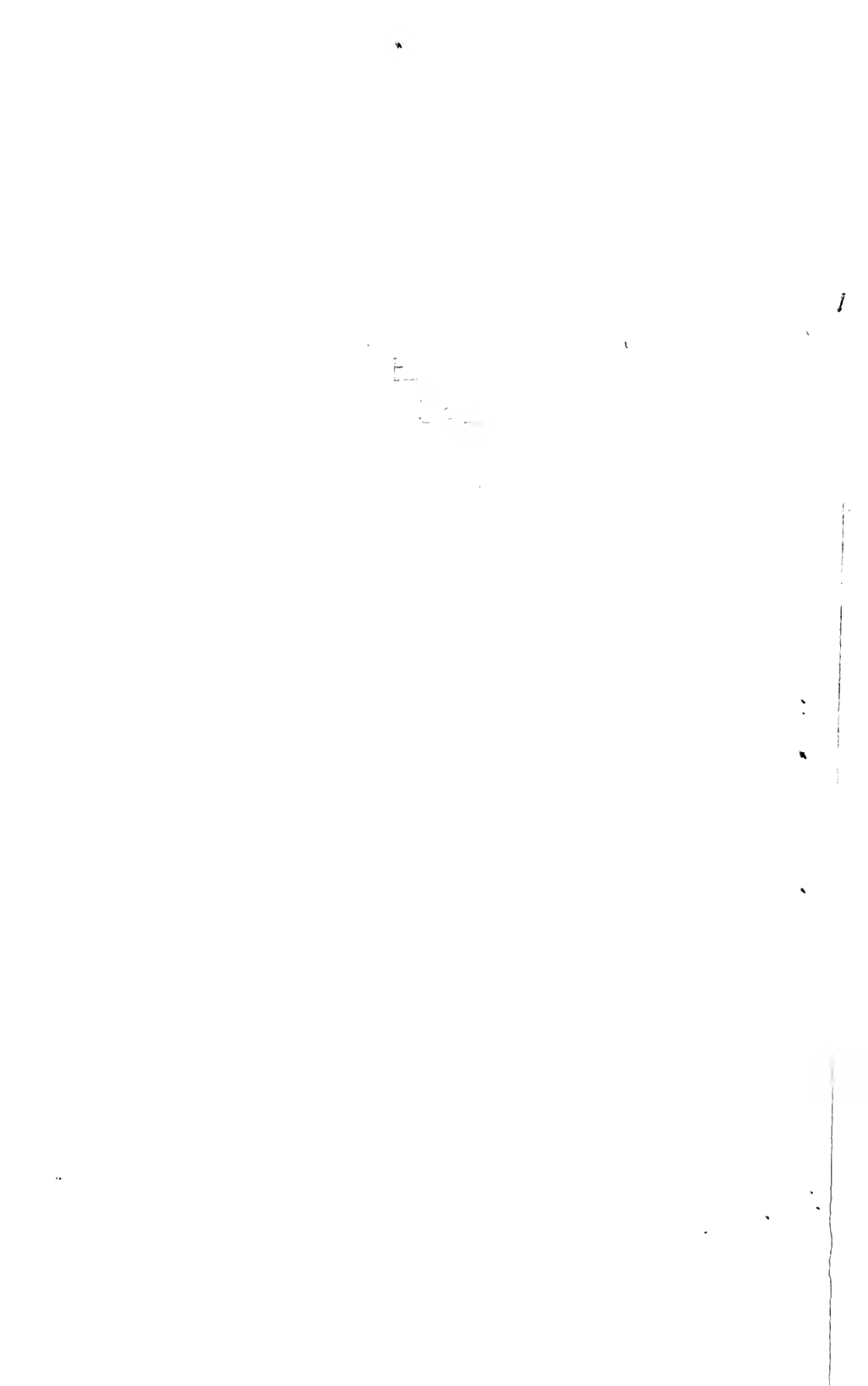
DELIVERED BEFORE THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING, TUESDAY,
JANUARY 6th, 1880.

BY

MAJ. GEN. J. WATTS DE PEYSTER, M.A., LL.D., F.R.H.S.,

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A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY.



SIR JOHN JOHNSON.

Born 5th Nov., 1742—Died 4th Jan., 1830.

It is well for men to reflect upon two or three expressions in the Bible which demonstrate that injustice is not always to exercise omnipotent sway; and that even the "High Song" of Odin, in the "Edda," was mistaken when it sang:

"One thing I know that never dies,
The verdict passed upon the dead."

Whoever assumed the name of the "Preacher King" to present his own opinions in the Apocryphal book, styled the "Wisdom of Solomon," uttered a multitude of truths worthy of the divinely-inspired son of David, but no grander enunciation than the assurance, "Vice [Falseness] shall not prevail against Wisdom" (Truth); and St. Paul, the greatest human being who, *as a fact* and not a fiction, ever trod this little world of man, promised that even to humanity "every man's work shall be made manifest."

It is in this interest—Truth—that the address of the evening is delivered.

Victor Hugo, a truly bright, however erratic, mind, has thrown off, from time to time, sentences which are undoubted sparks of genius. One of these is his denunciation of the delusive lights of Success. "Success," says this great writer, "has a *dupe*—History!" It has another *dupe*—Public Opinion; and this latter is nowhere blinded by such obliquity, if not actual opacity, of vision as in this country; preferring gilt to gold, and bestowing the highest prizes on men, who, in comparison with demigods like Thomas, are of mere clay.

The whole of our Revolutionary history is a myth. A member of this very society has torn some of the coverings from apparently slight scratches and revealed festering sores. It would be well if there were other practitioners as daring.

The effort of this evening will be simply the vindication of a gentleman who has borne up, like an Atlas, under the hundred years of obloquy heaped upon his memory, a load of which he can alone be relieved by outspoken truth.

The present King of Sweden has just published a species of vindication of one who was a grand hero and a great soldier, although historian, poet and playwright have united in damning his memory with faint praise, summed up in the epithet: "The Madman of the North." Could this opprobrious term be heard by Charles the Twelfth, he might exclaim with St. Paul, and with equal justice, "I am not mad?" for Charles was a patriot King, a Soldier, a General, a Man—the latter in the grandest sense of the word—without

any vice, with manifold virtues. He failed, and he fell; and the curs that barked from afar off at the living lion howled in triumph over the kingly creature which Fortune not their fangs tore down.

The royal author—Oscar II., in the following eloquent passages quoted, doubtless refers to the misjudgments of his countrymen in regard to prominent men who sustained the losing side in the civil wars of his country, as well to those of Swedes and foreigners upon his predecessor:

"The past appeals to the impartiality of the future. History replies. But, often, generations pass away ere that reply can be given in a determinate form. For not until the voices of contemporaneous panegyric and censure are hushed; not until passionate pulses have ceased to beat; until flattery has lost its power to charm, and calumny to vilify, can the verdict of history be pronounced. Then from the clouds of error and prejudice the sun of truth emerges, and light is diffused in bright rays, of ever increasing refulgency and breadth. * * Every age has its own heroes—men who seem to embody the prevailing characteristics of their relative epochs, and to present to after ages the idealized expression of their chief tendencies. Such men must be judged by no ordinary standard. History must view their actions as a whole, not subject them to separate tests, or examine them through the lens of partial criticism and narrow-minded prejudice."

In this connection old *Æsop* steps in with one of the remarkable fables which have outlived his gods and cosmogony by over a decade of centuries. A lion, observing the sculptured group of a hunter strangling one of the lords of the forest, growls out: "What a different piece of art—if lions were sculptors—would be standing on yonder pedestal! It would be the hunter torn in pieces by the lion."

To no class who have ever lived can such remarks as these apply as to the Loyalists, nicknamed "Tories," of the American Revolution. Modern Italy has sought to efface the remembrance of wrongs done to the Waldenses. Bigoted Spain is opening her eyes to the mingled chivalry and industry of the Moors, who made their peninsula the world's centre for learning; who clothed the southern sides of her rugged sierras with luscious vineyards; and made her arid valleys to blossom like the rose. France waits for the Huguenot element which her priest-ridden, lecherous King drove out to scatter its seed throughout the world, and enrich his enemies with their invincible swords, but, far better, their in-

domitable enterprise and energy. This country—ours—is yet unwilling to accord justice to the race or class it oppressed and expelled, during the Revolution, because to reverse the verdict would be to condemn the successful party to a judgment more discreditable and deserved than that meted out to the victims of fidelity—the Loyalists of 1776. The Waldenses or persecuted Protestants of Savoy, under their pastor and colonel, Arnaud, in August–September, 1689, by “their thirty days march,” and attempt to reconquer their native seats, furnished “unquestionably the most epic achievement of modern times,” and won world-wide celebrity and glory through seeking, sword in hand, to recover their desecrated ancestral homes. Why, then, should the slightest breath of censure cloud the crystalline memories of the Loyalists, who initiated their resolution and perilled all, not for gain but for duty; not for pay but for principle; and all, in this, were eminently faithful, paying, in many cases, what Lincoln styled “the last full measure of devotion.” The patriots, so-called, had much to gain individually, and, with comparatively few exceptions, very little to lose. All these considerations suggest a direct appeal to the calm thought and honest judgment of the generation which has just lived through “the Great American Conflict.” The Loyalists of the Revolution were identical with the Union party in the *Rebel* (or *Confederate*) States during the “Slaveholders’ Rebellion,” and the very title, “Loyal men,” was applied to the party that sustained the national government in 1860–65, as was, justly, the term “rebels” to those who sought its overthrow.

The father of Sir John Johnson—the subject of this address—was the famous Sir William Johnson, Baronet, Major-General in the Royal Service and British Superintendent of Indian Affairs. This gentleman was, perhaps, the most prominent man in the province of New York during the decade which preceded the Declaration of Independence. Whether a Jansen—a descendant of one of those indomitable Hollanders who went over with William III. to subdue Ireland, and anglicised their names—or of English race proper, Sir William was a strong example of those common-sense men who know how to grapple fortune by the forelock and not clutch in vain the tresses which flowed down her receding back. He opened two of the most productive valleys in the world—the Mohawk and Schoharie—to emigration; and with the development of their riches rose to a height of opulence and influence unequalled in the “Thirteen Colonies.” Just in his dealings with all men, he was particularly so with the Indians, and acquired a power over the latter such as no other individual ever possessed. Transferred from civil jurisdiction to military command he exhibited no less ability in the more dangerous and laborious exigencies of war. He, it was, who first stemmed successfully the tide of French invasion, and turned it back at Lake George, in 1755; receiving from his sovereign, in recognition of his able services, the first hereditary baronetcy in this country. At “Johnson Hall” he lived in truly baronial state, and no other provincial magnate ever

exhibited such affluence and grandeur as was displayed by him in his castle and home on the Mohawk.

His greatest achievement, perhaps, was the defeat of a superior French force seeking to relieve Fort Niagara and his capture of this noted stronghold in 1759. The distinguished British general and military historian, Sir Edward Cust, in his “Annals of the Wars,” refers in the following language to this notable exploit of Sir William: “This gentleman, like Clive, was a self-taught general, who, by dint of innate courage and natural sagacity, without the help of a military education or military experience, rivalled, if not eclipsed, the greatest commanders. Sir William Johnson omitted nothing to continue the vigorous measures of the late general [Prideaux killed] and added to them everything his own genius could suggest. The troops, who respected, and the provincials, who adored, him,” were not less devoted than the Six Nations of Indians who gladly followed the banner of himself and his less fortunate son.

Thus, with a sway incomprehensible in the present day, beloved, respected and feared by law breakers and evil doers, the mortal enemies of his semi-civilized wards—the Six Nations—he lived a life of honor; and died, not by his own hand, as stated by prejudiced tradition, but a victim to that energy, which, although it never bent in the service of king or country, had to yield to years and nature. Sick, and thereby unequal to the demands of public business, he presided at a council, 11 July, 1774, spoke and directed, until his ebbing strength failed, and could not be restored by the inadequate remedial measures at hand on the borders of the wilderness. To no one man does Central New York owe so much of her physical development as to Sir William Johnson.

Wedded in 1739, to a Hollandish or German maiden, amply endowed with the best gifts of nature, both physical and mental, “good sound sense, and a mild and gentle disposition,” Sir William was by her the father of one son, born in 1742, and several daughters. The latter are sufficiently described in a charming, well-known book, entitled “The Memoirs of an American Lady”—Mrs. Grant, of Laggan. The former was Sir John Johnson, a grander representative of the transition era of this State, than those whom Success and its Dupe—History, have placed in the national “Walhalla.” While yet a youth this son accompanied his father to his fields of battle, and when the generality, of boys are at school or college, witnessed two of the bloodiest conflicts on which the fate of the colony depended. He had scarcely attained majority when he was entrusted with an independent command, and in it displayed an ability, a fortitude, and a judgment, worthy of riper years and wider experience.

Sent out to England by his father in 1765, “to try to wear off the rusticity of a country education,” immediately upon his presentation at court he received from his sovereign an acknowledgment—partly due to the reputation of his parent, and partly to his own tact and capacity—such as stands alone in colonial his-

tory. Although his father, Sir William, was already a knight and baronet for service to the crown, John was himself knighted, at the age of twenty-three; and thus the old-new baronial hall at Johnstown sheltered two recipients, in the same family and generation, of the honor of knighthood. There is no parallel to this double distinction in American biography, and but few in the family annals of older countries. When they occur they have been made the theme of minstrel, poet and historian.

This was the era when "New York was in its happiest state."

In the Summer of 1773, and in his thirtieth year, Sir John Johnson married the beautiful Mary—or, as she was affectionately called, "Polly"—Watts, aged nineteen. She was born in New York 27th Oct., 1753, and died 7th August, 1815, at Mount Johnson, near Montreal. Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, has left us a charming pen portrait of this bright maiden:

"Returning for a short time to town in Spring I found aunt's house much enlivened by a very agreeable visitor: this was Miss W.(atts), daughter to the Hon. Mr. W.(atts), of the council. Her elder sister was afterwards Countess of Cassilis, and she herself was, long afterwards, married to the only native of the continent, I believe, who ever succeeded to the title of baronet. She possessed much beauty, and understanding and vivacity. Her playful humor exhilarated the whole household. I regarded her with admiration and delight, and her fanciful excursions afforded great amusement to aunt, and were like a gleam of sunshine amidst the gloom occasioned by the spirit of contention which was let loose among all manner of people."

The graces which the authoress commemorated are corroborated by others. Even after many years of trial and sorrow, her portrait bears out the characteristics attributed to her. Her features are most familiar to the relator, as her portrait hung in the chamber occupied by him in youth. The elder sister referred to was likewise a bright and charming woman, as appears from her picture in Colzean Castle, one of the hereditary abodes of her husband, the eleventh Earl, who built the stately mansion, No. 1 Broadway, in this city. The Castle, from its commanding site, looks forth over the Frith of Clyde, upon a remarkable freak of nature, the stupendous insulated rock, or rather mountain, from which her son derived his title as first Marquis of Ailsa. Her family had long been distinguished in colonial annals. Her grandfather was of the WATT family of "Rose Hill," near—now within—the limits of Edinburgh, and as "of that ilk," had been so known for over a century. The old family mansion is yet standing, and although degraded into the service of a railroad company, still in its degeneration and partial ruin attests its former stateliness. Her father, Hon. JOHN WATTS, Senior, was one of the first men of the colony. He had vindicated the rights of his fellow citizens against the military oppressions of the day. Nevertheless, the "Sons of Liberty"—or rather "License," made him one of their first victims. To save his life he became an exile; and an exile he died in Wales, and his bones, far away from those of kith and kin, found a resting place in the parish church of St. James,

in Piccadilly, London, near the remains of his sister, Lady Warren, the wife of the famous Admiral who took Louisburg in 1745. "John Watts, Esq., was an eminent merchant of New York, a gentleman of family, of character and reputation, opulent and of a disposition remarkable for the most unbounded hospitality. He served many years as a representative for the city of New York, and more perhaps, afterwards, as one of his Majesty's Council. He was proscribed by the rebel Legislature of New York, his person attainted, and his estate confiscated," although he had not been in the country for over a year before the Declaration of Independence.

Had the crown been victorious this John Watts would have been the Lieutenant-Governor and Acting Governor of this Province, succeeding his wife's grandfather, the famous Cadwallader Colden. His son and namesake, John Watts, was the last royal Recorder of the city of New York, remained here during the revolution; and after it, was Speaker of the State Assembly and Member of Congress. Defeated at the polls by the scion of a family aristocratic in sentiment however democratic in politics, who aroused the people against him by disseminating hand bills demanding if freemen could trust the kinsman, connection and friend of the English nobility, he retired from public life. This disappointment did not dim his philanthropy; and to him this city owes one of the noblest charitable institutions in its midst—the Leake and Watts Orphan Home. A younger brother, Stephen, "an elegant and charming youth," entered the British service; and following the fortunes of his brother-in-law, Sir John Johnson, left a limb and nearly his life on the bloody field of Oriskany. So fearfully mangled that few officers have survived such a complication of wounds and barbarous treatment, he was saved through the fidelity of Indians and his own soldiers, and carried back to Quebec—a long and weary transit. He lived to a good old age in England, and left a progeny of sons, who rose to high and honorable trusts in various branches of the royal service.

The eldest brother, Robert, married Mary, eldest daughter of Maj.-Gen., titular Lord, or Earl of, Stirling, who disinherited her because she had married a Loyalist, and clung to the fortunes of her husband.

Inheriting his father's dignities and responsibilities, Sir John Johnson could not have been otherwise than a champion of his sovereign's rights. If he had turned his coat to save his property, like some of the prominent patriots, he would have been a renegade, if not worse. Some of the greater as well as the lesser lights of patriotism had already cast longing glances upon his rich possessions in the Mohawk Valley. Its historian tells us that in a successful rebellion the latter counted upon dividing his princely domains into snug little farms for themselves. The sperm of anti-rentism was germinating already; although it took over sixty to seventy years to thoroughly enlist legislative assistance, and perfect spoliation in the guise of modern agrarian law. Surrounded by a devoted tenantry, backed by those "Romans of America," the "Six Nations," it was not easy "to bell the cat" by force. It is not politic to revive hereditary animosities

by the mention of names in this hall. Sufficient to say, might prevailed over right, and Sir John was placed under what the Albany Committee chose to define a "parole." Modern courts of inquiry, especially in the United States since 1860, have decided that such a system of paroling is in itself invalid, and that individuals subjected to such a procedure are absolved *de facto* from any pledges.

The Albany Committee had no legitimate power to impose a parole upon a dutiful subject, more particularly an officer of the King. This was certainly the case at any period prior to the Declaration of Independence. All these events occurred from six weeks to six months prior to the date of this instrument. It was simply an operation of mob law. The rioters in New York, in July, 1863, had just as much rightful authority to place under parole a National or Municipal officer captured while supporting the law and endeavoring to maintain order, or even a private citizen opposed to these riotous proceedings, as this Albany Committee, in a great measure self-constituted, to put and hold under what they chose to call a parole in the Winter and Spring of 1776, an important agent of the crown, exercising authority by the appointment and commission of legitimate government.

This address has now reached a point where it seems proper to invite the attention of the audience to the consideration of the charge in relation to the violation of this parole which the rebels or patriots, or whatever they may be most properly styled, have brought forward so prominently and persistently to brand the character of Sir John. They say he violated his parole and fled *their tender mercies*. This common charge of American historical writers, that Sir John broke his parole, is proven to be "without foundation and untrue." The testimony as to the untruth of this popular charge, can be found in publications on the shelves of the library of this very institution. To cite it textually would occupy more time than can be devoted to the whole address; sufficient will be presented to establish the main facts. It may be as well, however, to premise; that Count d'Estaing, the first French Commander who brought assistance to this country, had notoriously broken his parole, and yet no American writer has ever alluded to the fact as prejudicial to his honor. It did not serve their purpose. The French held that Washington violated his parole; and Michelet, a devoted friend to liberty and this country, feelingly refers to this to demonstrate one of the heart-burnings which France had to overcome in lending assistance to the revolted colonies. How many Southern officers, in spite of their paroles, met us on battlefield after battlefield. Regiments and brigades, if not divisions, paroled at Vicksburg, were encountered within a few weeks in the conflicts around Chattanooga. French generals, paroled by the Prussians, did not hesitate to accept active commands in even the shortest spaces of time. Under the circumstances this charge against Sir John was a pretext; but weak as it is, it is *not true*. Power in all ages has not been delicate in its choice of means to destroy a dangerous antagonist.

The magnificent Louis XIV. never hesitat-

ed to imitate the employment of hireling assassins so successfully initiated by that champion of the Papal Church, Philip II. Thus the Duke of Alva lured Horn and Egmont into the toils which they exchanged for the scaffold. Abd-el-Kader surrendered on terms which were only granted to be violated. And blackest of examples, how was the chivalric Osceola inveigled into chains. Had Sir John violated his parole, circumstances justified him, but he did not do so.

What is the truth of this charge?

Not satisfied with putting him under parole, the Albany Committee, egged on by the patriots (sic) of Tryon county, determined to seize Sir John Johnson's person.

It may be stated that "the antipathy" of the prominent family and its friends in Albany to the Johnsons and their connections arose from the Indian trade. The close relationship of blood never seems to have had the slightest power over the gnawing thirst for gain. The Johnson influence had been for a hundred and thirty-eight years in favor of the Indians and against the Albany traders. This was the leaven whose fermentation grew gradually stronger and stronger in its power to foment a bitterness which was augmented to the intensest degree of political antagonism.

In January, 1776, a raid was made upon "Johnson Hall" in consequence of the affidavit of an imposter. This reflected no credit on those engaged in it. Then it was that Sir John found himself placed under what has been styled his parole. From this time forward Sir John was harassed and hounded to the utmost extent of human patience and endurance. Finally, in March, the evacuation of Boston by the British gave a fresh stimulus to the successful colonists, and the Albany Committee made up their minds that the time had now come to deprive Sir John of his personal liberty. To justify such an outrage they had either to violate their own compact or release him from it. As the party endangered was not destitute of intelligence, it was necessary, in order to entrap him, to resort to deception. The principal agent in this design has left a letter, in which he emphasizes that care must be taken to prevent Sir John's being apprized of the real design of his opponents, and he therefore dispatched a communication, which, though cunningly conceived, was not sufficiently so to conceal the latent treachery. As Van der Does on Leyden wrote to Valdes, the Spanish General besieging and trying to tempt him to surrender:

"Fistula dulce canit volucrum, dum decipit anceps."

"The fowler plays sweet notes on his pipe when he spreads his net for the bird."

So Sir John was not deluded by the specious words of his enemies seeking to enmesh him.

Sir John was to be simultaneously released from his parole and made a prisoner. The officer who carried the communication discharging Sir John from his parole, was the bearer of directions to arrest him as soon as he had read it, "and make him a close prisoner, and carefully guard him that he may not have the least opportunity to escape." Sir John still had some friends among those who were now in power, and received intelligence of what was going

on. He exercised ordinary discretion, and, followed by devoted friends and retainers, escaped before the trap could be sprung upon him.

[There was no real semblance of government until the States began to organize. New York did not do so until 1777. The Thirteen Colonies were not *de jure* belligerents in any wise until the Mother Country established a regular exchange of prisoners. They were not belligerents to the world in the real sense of the term until their acknowledgment as a power by France, and Louis XVI. entered into a treaty of alliance with them. Great Britain conceded full belligerent rights when it appointed commissioners, in 1778, to treat with the Federal Congress. Previous to this the Thirteen Colonies occupied an abnormal position without anything beyond a very limited recognition as a legitimate government. Consequently what right had the Albany Committee to place a servant of the crown under parole? Moreover, according to all just principles of paroles, the parties arrogating to themselves the right to place Johnson under parole, were bound, when they undertook to rescind it, to place him in the same position as when the parole was exacted—the same as to means of resistance or escape—and not to revoke his parole and instantly and simultaneously arrest and to incarcerate him.]

There is, to repeat and emphasize, an ample sufficiency of evidence in existence and accessible in this building to prove that the common charge of American historical writers is "*without foundation and untrue.*"

Sir John fled, but he did not fly unaccompanied; and among his subsequent associates, officers and soldiers, were men of as good standing as those who remained behind to profit by the change of authority. Many of the latter, however, expiated their sins or errors on the day of reckoning at Oriskany.

Not able to seize the man, disappointed treachery determined to capture a woman. The victim this time was his wife. Why? The answer is in the words of a letter preserved in the series of the well-known Peter Force, which says: "It is the general opinion of people in Tryon county that, while Lady Johnson is kept a kind of hostage, Sir John will not carry matters to excess." Lady Johnson must have been a plucky woman; for even when under constraint, and in the most delicate condition that a woman can be, she exulted in the prospects of soon hearing that Sir John would soon ravage the country on the Mohawk river. To quote another letter from the highest authority, "It has been hinted that she is a good security to prevent the effects of her husband's virulence."

With a determination even superior to that exhibited by her husband, because she was a woman and he a man, Lady Johnson in mid-winter, January, 1777, in disguise, made her escape through hardships which would appal a person in her position in the present day. Through the deepest snows, through the extreme cold, through lines of ingrates and enemies, she made her way into this loyal city. Her story reads like a romance. People cite Flora MacDonald, Grace Darrell, Florence Nightingale. We had a heroine in our midst who

displayed a courage as lofty as theirs, but she is forgotten, because she was the wife of a man who had the courage to avenge her wrongs, even upon the victors, and chastise her enemies and persecutors as well as his own.

All this occurred prior to the Spring of 1777.

Sir Guy Carleton, undoubtedly the greatest character among the British military chieftains in America, received Sir John with open arms; and immediately gave him opportunities to raise a regiment, which made itself known and felt along the frontier, throughout the war. With a fatal parsimony of judgment and its application, the Crown never accumulated sufficient troops at decisive points, but either delayed their arrival or afterward diverted or frittered their strength away. In 1777, when Burgoyne was preparing for his invasion of New York, down the Hudson, St. Leger was entrusted with a similar advance down the Mohawk. Sir Henry Clinton, an able strategist and a brave soldier, but an indolent, nervous mortal, and an inefficient commander, recorded a sagacious opinion on this occasion, viz.: that to St. Leger was assigned the most important part in the programme with the most inadequate means to carry it out. To play this part successfully required a much larger force; and yet to take a fort garrisoned by nine hundred and fifty not efficient troops, with sufficient artillery, and fight the whole available population of Tryon county in arms beside, St. Leger had only 675 whites and an aggregation of about 1000 Indians from twenty-two different tribes, gathered from the remotest points administered by British officers, even from the extreme western shores of Lake Superior. To batter this fort he had a few small pieces of ordnance, which were about as effective as pop-guns; and were simply adequate, as he says in his report, to "tease," without injuring, the garrison. His second in command was Sir John Johnson.

For the relief of Fort Stanwix, Maj.-Gen. Harkheimer, Sir John's old antagonist, gathered up all the valid men in Tryon county, variously stated at from 800 and 900 to 1000, constituting four or five regiments of militia, and some Oneida Indians. These latter, traitors to a fraternal bond of centuries, seemed about as useless to their new associates as they were faithless to their old ties. To meet Harkheimer, St. Leger sent forward Sir John Johnson, and it is now clearly established beyond a doubt that his ability planned and his determination fought the battle of Oriskany. Had the Indians shown anything like the pluck of white men, not a provincial would have escaped. In spite of their inefficiency, Sir John's whites alone would have accomplished the business had it not been for "a shower of blessing" sent by Providence, and a recall to the assistance of St. Leger. As it was, this, the bloodiest battle of the Revolution at the North, was indecisive. Harkheimer lost his life, likewise hundreds of his followers, and Tryon county suffered such a terrific calamity, that to use the inference of its historian, if it smiled again during the war it smiled through tears. The iron will of Schuyler, another old antagonist of Sir John, sent Arnold, the best soldier of the Revolution, to

save Fort Stanwix, the key to the Mohawk valley. The rapid advance of this brilliant leader and the dastardly conduct and defection of the Indians, preserved the beleaguered work; and St. Leger and Sir John were forced to retire. On this salvation of Fort Stanwix, and not on Bennington, properly Hoosic or Walloomscoik nor on Saratoga, hinged the fate of the Burgoyne invasion and the eventual certainty of independence. No part of the failure is chargeable to Sir John.

As before mentioned, the English war administration seemed utterly inadequate to the occasion. They had not been able to grapple with its exigencies while the colonies were "doing for themselves," as Mazzini expressed it. When France and Spain entered the list, and Burgoyne's army had been eliminated from the war problem, they seem to have lost their heads; and, in 1778, abandoned all the fruits of the misdirected efforts of their main army. Clinton succeeded to Howe in the field, and Haldimand to Carleton in Canada. Haldimand, a Swiss by birth and a veteran by service, was as deficient in the priceless practical abilities in which his predecessor excelled. Those who knew him considered him an excellent professional soldier, but for administration and organization his gifts were small. He was so afraid that the French and Provincials would invade and dismember the remaining British possessions in North America, that he not only crippled Clinton in a measure, by constant demands for troops, but he was afraid to entrust such brilliant partisans as Sir John Johnson with forces sufficient to accomplish anything of importance. He suffered raids when he should have launched invasions, and he kept every company and battalion for the defence of a territory, which, except in its ports, was amply protected by nature and distance. Washington played on his timidity just as he afterward fingered the nervousness of Clinton. Thus the rest of 1777, the whole of 1778, and the greater part of 1779 was passed by Sir John in compulsory inactivity. He was undoubtedly busy. But, like thousands of human efforts which cost such an expenditure of thought and preparation, but are fruitless in marked results, their records are "writ in water."

In 1779 occurred the famous invasion of the territory of the Six Nations by Sullivan. In one sense it was triumphant. It did the devil's work thoroughly. It converted a series of blooming gardens, teeming orchards and productive fields into wastes and ashes. It was a disgrace to developing civilization, and, except to those writers who worship nothing but temporary success, it called forth some of the most scathing condemnations ever penned by historians. When white men scalp and flay Indians, and convert the skins of the latter's thighs into boot-tops, the question suggests itself, which were the savages, the Continental troops or the Indians. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that for every Indian slain and Indian hut consumed in this campaign, a thousand white men, women and children paid the penalty; and it is almost unexceptionally admitted that the inextinguishable hatred of the redskins to the United

States dates from this raid of Sullivan worthy of the Scottish chief who smoked his enemies to death in a cavern, or of a Pellissier, a St. Arnaud or a Pretorius.

Sullivan's military objective was Fort Niagara, the basis, for about a century, of inroads, French and British, upon New York. Why he did not make the attempt requires a consideration which would occupy more time than is assigned to this whole address. There were adversaries in his front who did not fear pop-gun artillery like the Indians, and were not to be dismayed by a lively cannonade as at Newtown. Haldimand had sent Sir John Johnson to organize a body of about two hundred and fifty white troops, besides the Indians, and these were rapidly concentrating upon Sullivan, when the latter countermarched. American historians give their reasons for this retreat: British writers explain it very differently. In any event this expedition was the last military command enjoyed by Sullivan. The Scripture here affords an expression which may not be inapplicable. "He departed without being desired."

Sir John's further aggressive movements were prevented by the early setting in of winter, which rendered the navigation of Lake Ontario too dangerous for the certain dispatch of the necessary troops and adequate supplies.

The extreme search for information in regard to the details of the movements upon this frontier, has been hitherto baffled. According to a reliable contemporary record, Sir John Johnson, Col. Butler and Capt. Brandt captured Fort Stanwix on the 2d of November, 1779. This is the only aggressive operation of the year attributed to him.

In 1780 Sir John was given head, or let loose, and he made the most of his time. In this year he made two incursions into the Mohawk Valley, the first in May and the second in October.

There is a very curious circumstance connected with this raid. The burial of his valuable plate and papers, and the guarding of the secret of this deposit by a faithful slave, although sold into the hands of his master's enemies; the recovery of the silver through this faithful negro, and the transport of the treasures, in the knapsacks of forty soldiers, through the wilderness to Canada, has been related in so many books that there is no need of a repetition of the details. One fact, however, is not generally known. Through dampness the papers had been wholly or partially destroyed; and this may account for a great many gaps and involved questions in narratives connected with the Johnson family. The "treasure-trove" eventually was of no service to anyone. God maketh the wrath of man to praise Him; and although Sir John was the rod of His anger, the staff of His indignation and the weapon of His vengeance for the injustice and barbarisms shown by the Americans to the Six Nations, but especially during the preceding year the instrument was not allowed to profit, personally, by the service. The silver, etc., retrieved at such a cost of peril, of life, of desolation and of suffering was not destined to benefit anyone. What, amid fire and sword and death and devastation, had been wrenched from the enemy was placed on shipboard for conveyance to England, and, by

the "irony of fate," the vessel foundered in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and its precious freight, like that described in the "Niebelungen Lied," sank into the treasury of so much of earth's richest spoils and possessions, the abyss of the sea.

It is said that his second invasion of this year was co-ordinate with the plan of Sir Henry Clinton, of which the basis was the surrender of West Point by Arnold. If so, the former bore to the latter the same relation that the advance of St. Leger did in respect to Burgoyne. St. Leger's failure burst the combined movement of 1777; and Arnold's abortive attempt exploded the conception of 1780. So that Sir John's movement, which was to have been one of a grand military series, unhappily for his reputation became an apparent "mission of vengeance," executed, however, with a thoroughness which was felt far beyond the district upon which the visitation came—came in such a terrible guise, that a hundred years have scarcely weakened the bitterness of its memories. Whatever else may be debited to him, it can be said of him, as of Graham of Claverhouse, that he did his work effectively.

Although one hundred years have scarcely passed away since the events considered in this address, there are almost as conflicting accounts of the personal appearance of Sir John as there are antagonistic judgments in respect to his character. By some he has been represented as over six feet in height; by others as not taller than the ordinary run of men in his district. Doubtless in mature years he was a stout or stalwart figure, and this, always at least to some extent, detracts from height, and deceives unless everything is in exact proportion. The only likeness in existence which is in accordance with descriptions, an engraving of F. Bartolozzi, R. A., is a rare one from some contemporary work, representing him in his uniform. It is not inconsistent with the pictures of him ordinarily produced in well known works. These, however, from the costume and expression, seem to have been taken at an earlier date.

[Mr. de Lancey, at page 642 (Note IV.), Vol. 2, appended to Jones' "History of New York," etc., furnishes a description of Sir John, which tallies exactly with the colored engraving by Bartolozzi, in the speaker's possession.

"He was a handsome, well-made man, a little short, with blue eyes, light hair, a fresh complexion, and a firm but pleasant expression. He was quick and decided in disposition and manner, and possessed of great endurance."

He has been "described as cold, haughty, cruel and implacable, of questionable" courage, and with a feeble sense of personal honor. Mr. William C. Bryant, in his admirable biographical sketch, disposes of this repulsive picture with a single honest sentence: "The detested title of *Tory*, in fact, was a synonym for all these unamiable qualities."

According to a recently found sketch of Charleston, South Carolina, published in 1854, it would appear that every American opposed to French Jacobinism was stigmatized as an aristocrat; and when Washington approved of Jay's treaty of 1795, six prominent advocates of his policy were hung in effigy and polluted with every mark of indignity; then

burned. Even the likeness of Washington, at full length, on a sign, is reported to have been much abused by the rabble. These patriots experienced the same treatment accorded to the character of Sir John. The procession at Poughkeepsie, in this State, to ratify the adoption of the Federal Constitution, came near ending in bloodshed. Any one opposed to slavery, when it existed, risked his life, south of "Mason and Dixon's line," if he uttered his sentiments in public. No virtues would have saved him from violence. On the other hand, there were classes and communities at the North who would not concede a redeeming quality to a slaveholder. Passion intensifies public opinion. The masses never reflect.

Here let a distinction be drawn which very few, even thinking persons, duly appreciate. The rabble are not the people. Knox, in his "Races of Men," draws this distinction most clearly. And yet in no country to such an extent as in the United States is this mistake so often made. Old Rome was styled by its own best thinkers and annalists "the cesspool of the world;" and if any modern State deserves this scathing imputation, it is this very State of New York. Count Tallyrand-Perigord said that as long as there is sufficient virtue in the thinking classes to assimilate what is good, and reject what is vicious in immigration, there is true progress and real prosperity. When the poison becomes superior to the resistive and assimilative power, the descent begins. It is to pander to the rabble, not the people, that such men as Sir John Johnson are misrepresented. Such a course is politic for demagogues. To them the utterance of the truth is suicidal, because they only could exist through such perversions worthy of a Machiavelli. They thrive through political Jesuitism. The Roman populace were maintained and restrained by "*panem et circenses*." The modern voting rabble feed like them—to use the Scripture expression—on the wind of delusion; and it is this method of portraiture which enabled the Albany Committee to strike down Sir John, confiscate his property and drive him forth; and carry out like purposes in our very midst to-day.

People of the present day can scarcely conceive the virulence of vituperation which characterized the political literature of a century since. Hough, in his "*Northern Invasion*," has a note on this subject which applies to every similar case. The gist of it is this: The opinions of local populations in regard to prominent men were entirely biased, if not founded upon their popularity or the reverse. If modern times were to judge of the character of Hannibal by the pictures handed down by the gravest of Roman historians, he would have to be regarded as a man destitute of almost every redeeming trait except courage and ability or astuteness; whereas, when the truth is sifted out, it is positively certain that the very vices attributed to the great Carthaginian should be transferred to his Latin adversaries.

Sir John was not cold. He was one of the most affectionate of men. Mr. Bryant tells us that he was not "haughty," but, on the contrary, displayed qualities which are totally inconsistent with coldness. "His manners were

peculiarly mild, gentle and winning. He was remarkably fond of the society of children, who, with their marvellous insight into character, bestowed upon him the full measure of their unquestioning love and faith. He was also greatly attached to all domestic animals, and notably very humane and tender in his treatment of them." Another writer, commenting upon these traits, remarks: "His peculiar characteristic of tenderness to children and animals, makes me think that the stories of his inhumanity during the War of the Revolution cannot be true."

He was not "cruel." A number of instances are recorded to the contrary, in themselves sufficient to disprove such a sweeping charge.

The honest Bryant penned a paragraph which is pertinent here in this connection.

"Sir John, certainly, inherited many of the virtues which shed lustre upon his father's name. His devotion to the interests of his government; his energetic and enlightened administration of important trusts; his earnest championship of the barbarous race which looked up to him as a father and a friend; his cheerful sacrifice of a princely fortune and estate on what he conceived to be the altar of patriotism, cannot be controverted by the most virulent of his detractors. The atrocities which were perpetrated by the invading forces under his command are precisely those which, in our annals, have attached a stigma to the names of Montcalm and Burgoyne. To restrain an ill-disciplined rabble of exiled Tories and ruthless savages was beyond the power of men whose humanity has never in other instances been questioned."

The majority of writers absolve Montcalm; and Burgoyne disclaimed, and almost conclusively proved, that he was not responsible for the charges brought against him by the grandiloquent Gates and others, who did not hesitate to draw upon their imagination to make a point. Sir John, with his own lips, declared, in regard to the cruelties suffered by the Whigs during his first inroad, that "their Tory neighbors, and not himself, were blamable for those acts." It is said that Sir John much regretted the death of those who were esteemed by his father, and censured the murderer. But how was he to punish! Can the United States at this day, with all its power, punish the individual perpetrators of cruelties along the Western frontier and among the Indians? It is justly remarked that if the "Six Nations" had an historian, the Chemung and Genesee valleys, desolated by Sullivan, would present no less glowing a picture than of those of the Schoharie and Mohawk, which experienced the visitations of Sir John. He, at all events, ordered churches to be spared. Sullivan's vengeance was indiscriminate, and left nothing standing in the shape of a building which his fires could reach. Sir John more than once interposed his disciplined troops between the savages and their intended victims. He redeemed captives with his own money; and while without contradiction he punished a guilty district with military execution, it was not directed by his orders or countenance against individuals. Hough, for himself, and quoting others, admits that "no violence was offered to women and children." There is

nothing on record or hinted to show that he refused mercy to prisoners; no instance of what was termed "Tarleton's quarter" is cited; and it is very questionable if cold-blooded speculation in the American administrative corps did not kill off incalculably more in the course of a single campaign, than fell at the hands of all, white and red, directed by Johnson, during the war.

As to the epithet "implacable," that amounts to nothing. To the masses, anyone who punishes a majority, even tempering justice with mercy, provided he moves in a sphere above the plane of those who are the subjects of the discipline, is always considered not only unjust but cruel. The patriots or rebels of Tryon county had worked their will on the persons of the family and the properties of Sir John Johnson; and he certainly gave them a good deep draught from the goblet they had originally forced upon his lips. He did not live up to the Christian code which all men preach and no man practices, and assuredly did not turn the other cheek to the smiter, or offer his cloak to him who had already stolen his coat. I claim there was great justification for his conduct. The masses can understand nothing that is not brought home to them in letters of fire and of suffering. Their compassion and their fury are both the blaze of straw; and their cruelty is as enduring as the heat of red hot steel. The manner in which the construction of elevated railroads has been permitted in the city of New York, to the detriment and even comparative ruin of individuals, shows how little the public care if the few suffer provided it is benefited. Sir John may be taken as representing the parties who were most deeply injured by such a system. If these blew up a portion of the road with the trains upon it containing the directors and prominent stockholders, the laws of this State, like those favoring "Anti-rentism," and seemingly adjusted for the protection of wrong, would term such an act conspiracy and murder. Whereas disinterested parties, knowing the facts, might esteem it a righteous retribution, which, although punishable as a crime against society, was not without excuse as humanity is constituted.

There is only one more charge against Sir John to dispose of, viz., that "his courage was questionable." The accusation in regard to his having a "feeble sense of personal honor" rests upon the stereotyped fallacy in regard to the violation of his parole. This has already been treated of and shown to be unsustained by evidence. In fact, it was proved that he did not do so. In this connection it is necessary to cite a few more pertinent words from the impartial William C. Bryant. This author says: "Sir John's sympathies were well known, and he was constrained to sign a pledge that he would remain neutral during the struggle then impending. There is no warrant for supposing that Sir John, when he submitted to this degradation, secretly determined to violate his promise on the convenient plea of duress, or upon grounds more rational and quieting to his conscience. The jealous espionage to which he was afterwards exposed—the plot to seize upon his person and restrain his liberty—doubtless furnished the coveted pretext for breaking faith with the 'rebels.'"

The charge of "questionable courage" is utterly ridiculous.

In the first place, it originated with his personal enemies, and if such evidence were admissible, it is disproved by facts. There is scarcely any amount of eulogy which has not been lavished upon Arnold's expedition from the Kennebec, across the great divide between Maine and Canada, down to the siege of Quebec, and the same praise has been extended to Clarke for his famous march across the drowned lands of Indiana. Arnold deserves all that can be said for him, and so does Clarke, and everyone who has displayed equal energy and intrepidity. It is only surprising that similar justice has not been extended to Sir John. It is universally conceded that when he made his escape from his persecutors, in 1776, and plunged into the howling wilderness to preserve his liberty and honor, he encountered all the suffering that it seemed possible for a man to endure. As a friend remarks, one who is well acquainted with the Adirondack wilderness, such a traverse would be an astonishing feat, even under favorable circumstances and season, at this day. Sir John was nineteen days in making the transit, and this, too, at a season when snow and drifts still blocked the Indian paths, the only recognized thoroughfares. No man deficient in spirit and fortitude would ever have made such an attempt. Both of the invasions under his personal leading were characterized by similar daring. The cowardice was on the part of those who hurled the epithet at him. Their own writers admit it by inference, if not in so many words.

One of the traditions of Fryon county, which must have been well-known to be remembered after the lapse of a century, is to the effect that in the last battle, variously known as the fight on Klock's field, or Fox's Mills, both sides ran away from each other. Were it true of both sides, it would not be an extraordinary example. Panics, more or less in proportion, have occurred in the best of armies. There was a partial one after Wagram, after Castalla, after Solferino, and at our first Bull Run. But these are only a few among scores of instances that might be cited. What is still more curious, while a single personal enemy of Sir John charged him with quitting the field, the whole community abused his antagonist, Gen. Van Rensselaer, for not capturing Sir John and his troops, when a court martial decided that while the General did all he could, his troops were very "bashful," as the Japanese term it, about getting under close fire, and they had to be withdrawn from it to keep the majority from running home bodily. The fact is that the American State levies, quasi-regulars, under the gallant Col. Brown, had experienced such a terrible defeat in the morning, that it took away from the militia all their appetite for another fight with the same adversaries in the evening. Sir John's conduct would have been excusable if he had quitted the field, because he had been wounded, and a wound at this time, in the midst of an enemy's country, was a casualty which might have placed him at the mercy of an Administration which was not slow, with or without law, at inflicting cruelties, and even hanging in haste and trying at leisure.

But Sir John did not quit the field prematurely. He was not there to fight, to oblige his adversaries; his tactics were to avoid any battle which was not absolutely necessary to secure his retreat. He repulsed his pursuers and he absolutely returned to Canada, carrying with him as prisoners an American detachment which sought to intercept and impede his movements. While Van Rensselaer, the scion of a race which displayed uncommon courage in the Colonial service, was being tried and sought to be made a scape-goat for the shortcomings of his superiors and inferiors, Sir John was receiving the compliments, in public orders, of his own superior, Gen. Haldimand, to whom the German officers in America have given in their published correspondence and narratives the highest praise as a professional soldier and therefore judge of military merit. What is more, as a farther demonstration of the injustice of ordinary history, the severe Governor Clinton was either with Van Rensselaer or near at hand, and consequently as much to blame as the latter for the escape of Sir John. Stone, who wrote at a time when as yet there were plenty of living contemporaries, distinctly says that Gov. Clinton was with Gen. Van Rensselaer just before the battle and remained at Fort Plain, while the battle was taking place a few miles distant. Finally, the testimony taken before the court martial indicates that the Americans were vastly superior in numbers to, if not more than double, Sir John's whites and Indians; and it was the want, as usual, of true fighting pluck in the Indians, and their abandonment of their white associates which made the result at all indecisive for the Loyalists. Had the redskins stood their ground it is very doubtful if the other side would have stopped short of Schenectady. All accounts agree that the invaders had been overworked and were overburdened, having performed extraordinary labors and marches; whereas, except as to ordinary expeditiousness, the Americans, quasi regulars and militia, were fresh and in light marching order, for they were just from home. So much stress has been laid on this fight because it has been always unfairly told, except before the court martial which exonerated Van Rensselaer. Ordinary human judgment makes the philosopher weep and laugh: weep in sorrow at the fallacy of history, and laugh in bitterness at the follies and prejudices of the uneducated and unreflecting.

Some of the greatest commanders who have ever lived have not escaped the accusation of want of spirit at one time or another. Even Napoleon has been blamed for not suffering himself to be killed at Waterloo, thus ending his career in a blaze of glory. Malice vented itself in such a charge against the gallant leader who saved the middle zone to the Union, and converted the despondency of retreat and defeat into victory. It is perhaps a remarkable fact that the mob always select two vituperative charges the most repugnant to a man of honor, perhaps because they are those to which they themselves are most open—falsehood and poltroonery; forgetting that it is not the business of a commander to throw away a life which does

not belong to himself individually but to the general welfare of his troops. Mere "physical courage," as has been well said by a veteran soldier, "is largely a question of nerves." Moral courage is THE God-like quality, the lever which in all ages has moved this world. Moreover it is the corner-stone of progress; and without it brute insensibility to danger would have left the nineteenth century in the same condition as the "Stone Age." A man, bred as Sir John had been, who had the courage to give up everything for principle, and with less than a modern battalion of whites, plunge again and again into the territory of his enemies, bristling with forts and stockaded posts, who could put in the field forty-five regiments, of which seventeen were in Albany and five in Tryon counties, the actual scenes of conflict, besides distinct corps of State levies raised for the protection of the frontiers, in which every other man was his deadly foe, and the majority capital marksmen, that could shoot off a squirrel's head at a hundred yards—such a man must have had an awful amount of a hero in his composition. Americans would have been only too willing to crown him with this halo, if he had fought on their side instead of fighting so desperately against them.

And now, in conclusion, let me call the brief attention of this audience to a few additional facts. Sir William Johnson was the son of his own deeds and the creature of the bounty of his sovereign. He owed nothing to the people. They had not added either to his influence, affluence, position or power. If this was true of the father as a beneficiary of the Crown, how much more so was the son. The people undertook to deprive the latter of that which they had neither bestowed nor augmented. They injured him in every way that a man could be injured; and they made that which was the most commendable in him—his loyalty to a gracious benefactor, his crime, and punished him for that which they should have honored. They struck; and he had both the courage, the power, and the opportunity to strike back. His retaliation may not have been consistent with the literal admonition of the Gospel, but there was nothing in it inconsistent with the ordinary temper of humanity and manliness.

Ladies and gentlemen, the people of this era have no conception of the fearful significance of Loyalty, 190 years since. Loyalty, then, was almost paramount to religion; next after a man's duty to his God was his allegiance to his prince. "*Noblesse oblige*" has been blazoned as the highest commendation of the otherwise vicious aristocracy of France. It is charged that when the perishing Bourbon dynasty was in direst need of defenders it discovered

them "neither in its titled nobility nor in its native soldiers," but in mercenaries. Whereas in America George III. found daring champions in the best citizens of the land, and foremost in the front rank of these stood Sir John Johnson. Hume, who is anything but an imaginative or enthusiastic writer, couples LOYALTY AND PATRIOTISM together; and with his philosophical words this vindication of Sir John Johnson is committed to your calm and unprejudiced judgment: "*The most inviolable attachment to the laws of our country is everywhere acknowledged a capital virtue; and where the people are not so happy as to have any legislature but a SINGLE PERSON, THE STRICTEST LOYALTY IS, IN THAT CASE, THE TRUEST PATRIOTISM.*"

"Hopes have precarious life;
They are oft blighted, withered, snapt sheer off;"
BUT FAITHFULNESS can feed on SUFFERING,
And knows no disappointment."

NOTE.

A letter lies before the author of the above Address, which is too pertinent and corroborative to be omitted. It is from the pen of a distinguished officer and one of the most reflecting men of this generation, who is likewise a collateral relation of one of the most prominent Continental generals. In it the writer says:

"The more I read and understand the American Revolution, the more I wonder at our success. I doubt if there were more than two States decidedly Whig—Massachusetts and Virginia. Massachusetts [morally] overlapped New Hampshire and the northern part of Rhode Island—dragged them after her. The Massachusetts people were Aryan [by race] with a strong injection of Jewish [instincts]. The population of southern Rhode Island and Connecticut were divided—more Loyal than Rebel. New York was Tory. New Jersey—eastern part, followed New York; western part, Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania was Tory. Maryland was divided. North Carolina partly followed her, partly South Carolina. South Carolina had many Tories. Georgia followed South Carolina. Two parties constituted the strength of the Whigs—the Democratic Communists of Massachusetts, and wherever their organization extended, and the [Provincial] aristocracy of Virginia, which was loyal to the King, but would not bend to the aristocratic Parliament. The Scotch [Protestant, not Papist] Irish in New York, Pennsylvania and North Carolina were Rebels to the backbone. The Dutch families in New York, the Huguenots in South Carolina, likewise. The Church party, the Germans, the Catholic Irish, and the Quakers were loyalist. The Dissenters everywhere were Rebels.

PROOFS CONSIDERED,

IN CONNECTION WITH THE VINDICATION OF

SIR JOHN JOHNSON, BART.,

BEING AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING, 6TH JANUARY, 1880,

By J. WATTS DE PEYSTER, Maj.-Gen., LL.D., F.R.H.S., Etc.

A P P E N D I X I.

Being Chapter IV. "History of New York during the Revolutionary War, and of the Leading Events in the other Colonies at that Period," by Thomas Jones, Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province. Edited by Edward Floyd de Lancy. With Notes, Contemporary Documents, Maps and Portraits. Volume I. New York. Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1879. Page 71.

In December, 1775, Congress ordered Gen. Schuyler—(in violation of a most solemn treaty, entered into by Commissioners appointed by themselves, and the Six United Indian Nations, at Albany, the Fall preceding, by which it was stipulated and agreed that the Mohawk river should be left open for trade, that no troops should be sent into these parts, and that Sir John Johnson should remain untouched, unmolested, and undisturbed by Congress, or any persons acting under their orders, in consequence of which the Indians engaged to continue peaceable and in a perfect state of neutrality; a treaty executed by each party with all the pomp and solemnity usual with the Indians upon such occasions, and afterwards fully and absolutely ratified by Congress)—to march with the Albany, the Ulster, and some New England militia, amounting to about 4000 men, into Tryon county, to disarm Sir John, the *loyal* inhabitants of Johnstown, and to break up a settlement of Highlanders then forming upon a part of Sir John's large estate in that county. The Committee at Albany, to whom the management of this expedition was recommended, were for some time at a loss or, as Schuyler himself expressed it in his letter to Congress, puzzled for a pretence to obey the orders of Congress by carrying the expedition into execution. But Sir John having built, some months before, a small island in a duck pond contiguous to the Hall, a poor, ignorant, illiterate fellow was prevailed upon by the Albany Committee (and perhaps paid for it besides) to swear that this little island contained within its bowels several thousand stand of arms, that the deponent was present, saw and assisted in the putting them in, and covering them up. This affidavit, which did not contain a word of truth, was made, as Schuyler mentions in another letter to Congress, the ostensible reason for undertaking the expedition. The real truth of this iniquitous business was a design formed by Congress to rob and plunder

Sir John, (1) the loyal inhabitants of Johnstown, to break up and destroy the Highland settlement, and to impress the Indians with an idea of the amazing power of Congress, and to gratify at the same time the malice and satiate the vengeance of some individual members of that body who were vexed, piqued, and chagrined at the Highlanders having preferred a settlement upon Sir John's land in preference to their own (Philip Livingston, James Duane and Isaac Low, three of the delegates from New York, who had large tracts of unsettled land in the same county.)¹ This, these selfish and disappointed persons had the impudence to call "patriotism."

The army was assembled at Albany, reviewed by Schuyler, marched to Schenectady, from thence to Caughmawaga, and and so on to Johnstown. Sir John, with a few domestics and some friends then at the Hall, stood upon his defence. The Indians appeared as mediators. They complained of the breach of the violation of a solemn treaty so recently made, so sacredly entered into by the contracting parties, and so solemnly ratified by the sachems of the Six United Indian Nations and by Congress, the sachems of the thirteen revolted colonies. It had no effect, Schuyler was in their country, and there, at the head of 4000 men in arms, articles of capitulation were at length proposed, litigated, settled and signed, by which Sir John, the inhabitants of Johnstown and the Highlanders surrendered their arms and ammunition. They were to be exempt from plunder, and all the king's stores (2) in the possession of Sir John were delivered up. The business thus finished, Schuyler began his march back for Albany, taking away with him all the leading men among the Highlanders as prisoners; but, stopping in the suburbs of Johnstown, he pretended that the Scotchmen, in delivering up their arms, had omitted some leathern pouches and a few dirks (something similar to this was afterward made use of by Congress to justify the scandalous breach of the Saratoga Convention (3)); he therefore sent back and demanded them. The Highlanders denied the charge. Whether this was a thought of his own, or the contrivance of some other person, has been hitherto undiscovered, but from Schuyler's well-known character, and the antipathy and hatred of himself, and all his connections to the Johnson family, it requires no great con-

jurament to find out from whence the scheme originated. This was all that was wanted. It was now suggested that the capitulation was broken; permission was therefore given to the army to plunder; they accordingly pillaged Sir John, the inhabitants of Johnstown, and the Highlanders, in which indiscriminate plunder none were exempt; men, women and children all fared alike. They even robbed the Episcopal Church, destroyed the organ, and in their lust for plunder broke open the vault in which were deposited the remains of the great, the good, the brave old Sir William, and scattered the bones about the sacred edifice. This done, the army returned to Albany, divided the plunder, and were disbanded. For this meritorious piece of service Schuyler received the thanks of Congress. From the destruction of a large flock of peacocks which Sir John had upon his farm, and the whole army decorating themselves with the stolen feathers, the Loyalists in that part of the country gave it the name of "Schuyler's Peacock Expedition," by which it is still known (1787) and perhaps ever will be. The laurels gained in this pious expedition were the only ones reaped by the magnanimous Gen. Schuyler during the whole course of the American war.

After this, the Committee of Albany designedly employed themselves in harassing Sir John as much as possible. If an Indian was seen with a new coat, a new blanket, or a new hat, Sir John was summoned to Albany, and [on wheels, on worst roads] strictly interrogated how the Indian came by it. He was sometimes ordered down twice in a week. The distance between Johnson Hall and Albany is at least forty miles. This was vexatious; it was done to give Sir John as much trouble as possible. He at length grew angry at such barbarous and irritating usage, and being a man of spirit, was consequently chagrined at the treatment he was constantly and repeatedly receiving from a set of common fellows who composed the Albany Committee, a pack as much below him, as they were themselves superior to the wolves that prowled the woods. He therefore took the resolution of leaving that part of the country, and accordingly in the month of June following, with a few Loyalists, and some steady true friends of the Mohawk Indians, he left the Hall and went through the woods without pursuing any of the usual routes, (4) and safely arrived in Canada after a fortnight's journey. The deserts he passed were, in many cases, almost impenetrable. Sir Guy Carleton, then Governor of, and Commander-in-Chief in, Canada, received him with open arms. As he was bold, resolute, spirited, brave and active, well acquainted with the frontier of New York, and in high estimation among the inhabitants, he was an acquisition to Sir Guy. He gave him a commission to raise two battalions of 500 men each, of which he was appointed the Colonel commandant. Sir John had the recommendation of his own officers, and he made a most judicious choice, in consequence of which his battalions were soon complete, and principally consisted of Loyalists from the counties of Albany, Charlotte and Tryon, where Sir John was well known, and his honor, his justice, his virtue, and generosity held in as much estimation as were those of his father, the hospitable old Sir William, in his lifetime. Sir John continued in Canada during the whole war (the Winter of 1776 excepted, which he spent in

New York), and behaved with a spirit, a courage, an intrepidity, and perseverance, scarcely to be equalled. *He did more mischief to the rebel settlements upon the frontiers of New York than all the partisans in the British service put together.* (5) He was ever out and always successful. He was so much beloved by the Mohawks, whose castles and settlements were in his neighborhood, that the whole nation to a man followed him into Canada, and attended him in all his excursions during the war. For this the rebels seized upon their lands, burnt their churches, destroyed their towns, and demolished their castles. (6) They are now settled in Canada, where they have land assigned them by an order from Great Britain, whose King they still call their Father. They were always the steady friends and allies of England. They have joined her standard in every war since the settlement of America. Yet the lands, the property of these firm friends and steady allies, were by Lord Shelburne's peace absolutely and totally surrendered and ceded to the rebel States without a condition, a term, or a stipulation in their favor, and this too, after an eight years' war, during the whole course of which they had taken an active and decided part in favor of the British cause, had lost many of their men, and some of their principal sachems.

No sooner had the Committee at Albany intelligence that Sir John was gone to Canada, than a detachment of Continentals was sent up to the Hall, with orders to make Lady Johnson a prisoner and bring her to Albany. This was accordingly done. The mansion was completely plundered of all its contents. The farm in Sir John's own occupation was robbed of his cattle, his negroes, his horses, hogs, sheep, and utensils of husbandry. His carriages were taken away, his papers of every kind (some of the utmost consequence, (7)) were stolen or destroyed, and all his slaves carried off. This done, Lady Johnson was escorted under a guard to Albany, a lady of great beauty, of the most amiable disposition, and composed of materials of the most soft and delicate kind. Besides this she was more than seven months advanced in her pregnancy. She was suffered to go to Albany in her own carriage driven by a servant of her own. But in order to add insult to insult, she was obliged to take the Lieutenant who commanded the detachment into the carriage with her, who was now converted from a mender of shoes in *Connecticut*, into an officer holding a commission under the honorable, the Continental Congress. Thus was Lady Johnson conducted from Sir John's seat to Albany, guarded by a parcel of half clothed dirty Yankees, and squired by a New England officer, by trade a cobbler, as dirty as themselves, until he had decorated himself with a suit of Sir John's clothes, and a clean shirt, and a pair of stockings, stolen at the Hall. A younger sister, and two children accompanied her ladyship to Albany. Lady Johnson had relations of opulence and interest in Albany, through whose influence she was permitted to reside with a venerable old aunt, with this positive injunction, *not to leave the city under pain of death.* She was, however, not in a condition to leave the town, had she been so disposed. She was also given to understand that if Sir John appeared in arms against the Americans, *retaliation should be made and she should be the object, and her life depended upon her husband's action.* What inhuman, unfeeling conduct! And yet these were the people who

during the whole war boasted of their humane, generous behavior, (8) and taxed the British and Loyalists as butchers, cutthroats and barbarians.

Lady Johnson being safely delivered, perfectly recovered, and the King's troops having defeated the rebel army upon Long Island and at the White Plains, taken and in possession of all York Island, Staten Island, Long Island, a part of Westchester, almost the whole of New Jersey, and Washington with the remains of his scattered army gone to the southward (9), the Albany Committee began to cool, and upon her ladyship's application to them for permission to go to New York, she was referred to the *Provincial Congress*, which was then sitting at the Fish Kills, a small, neat Dutch village, situate upon the eastern bank of the Hudson (in Dutchess county), nearly midway between New York and Albany. A pass for this purpose was given her, it was the latter end of November, when the weather is in general very severe. In consequence of her permission and pass, she left Albany, her sister accompanied her, she had no male friend or servant to attend her, she got safe to the Fish Kills, and made her application. It was unanimously rejected in a manner infamous, scornful, and brutish. Upon her arrival at the Fish Kills, she thought it best, prior to her application to the Convention as a body, to apply to James Duane, Esq., one of the members, and intercede with him to use his interest to procure her permission to go to New York. Mr. Duane was an intimate acquaintance of her ladyship's father, Mr. Watts, (10) of New York, who had been his patron, his friend, his protector, and in whose family he had been for many years as familiar as in those of his nearest relations, Lady Johnson was of course well known to him. Duane, being the descendant of an Irish father, and having purchased large tracts of land in the county of Tryon, had been particularly noticed, entertained, and most hospitably treated and assisted by Sir William Johnson (Sir William Johnson was a native of Ireland), the father of Sir John, in the settlement and improvement of his lands. Upon the death of Sir William, which happened in July, 1774, Sir John appointed him his attorney and counsel to transact all law matters whatever relative to the estate of his deceased father, a lucrative appointment. To this *being* did Lady Johnson (with all the meekness of a lamb, with a figure as delicate as imagination can conceive, and with those bewitching smiles ever attendant upon her intellectual face) apply for his interest and influence with the Convention for leave to go into New York. He received her with a haughty, supercilious air. 'This genius was, before the war, one of the greatest time-servers—haughty, proud and overbearing to his inferiors, and sycophantical to a degree of servility to his superiors, or to those who could serve his ambitious purposes, and, if his own brother could be believed, *not over honest*. But this might be owing to his profession—he was a lawyer. Being married in the Livingston family, disappointed in an application to Lord Dummore, and in another to Gen. Tryon, to be made one of his Majesty's council, and his determination to be a great man, all combined to hurry him down the stream of rebellion. Upon the evacuation of New York in 1783, he was made Mayor of the city. The Marquis de Chastellux, speaking of him, says *he is civil, jovial, and drinks without repugnance*.' She [Lady Johnson], with a tongue equal to that of a siren, with an in-

fant in her arms, recounted the favors he had received, and the great intimacy that had for many years subsisted between him, her father, her late father-in-law, and her husband. He scarcely asked her to sit down, treated her with incivility and impoliteness, and, with a countenance as black and grim as Milton's Devil, told her, "*that private friendship must be sacrificed to the good of the public, and no favors were to be expected of him.*" What base ingratitude!

Upon the rejection of Lady Johnson's application by the Provincial Congress, they gave her liberty to take up her residence with the family of David Johnson, Esq., an old acquaintance of her father's, who lived at the Nine Partners, Patent in Dutchess county, (11) about sixteen miles to the east of the Hudson, or with that of Cadwallader Colden, Esq., another of her father's friends, who lived at Coldenhana, in Ulster county, about twelve miles distant from the western shore of the Hudson. The latter was her choice. She was given, however, to understand, that if she attempted to escape, and should be retaken, she should immediately be treated with the utmost severity; or if Sir John appeared in arms and entered the State as an enemy, *she must expect to be made the victim of retaliation for his conduct*.

Is it possible that anything could be more cruel in a Christian country? Savages and barbarians would even shudder at the thought. Yet these were the people who called themselves the lambs of God, asserted they were contending in a righteous cause and fighting for the rights of mankind. Lady Johnson possessed great resolution. She was not terrified with their threats. She removed to Mr. Colden's, and the first thing she did was to hire a faithful, honest loyalist to go to Johnstown with a message to an honest, trusty loyal tenant of Sir John's, with directions to be with her at such an hour with a sleigh and a pair of good horses. It was now the middle of January and the whole country covered with snow. Lady Johnson and her sister procured dresses, by way of disguise, and appeared in the characters of common country wenches. The messenger was true to his trust, and the tenant appeared at the appointed time. Lady Johnson and her sister set out in the evening, travelled all night, and the next morning arrived safe at Paulus Hook, a British post upon the west side of the North river and directly opposite to New York. Here Sir John met her and conducted her to the city, since which they have never parted. She went with him the next Spring from New York to Canada, has been twice with him to England and twice returned to Canada, where they are now (1787) living in splendor, affluence, and reputation, and her ladyship the very idol of the people. Sir John is His Majesty's Superintendent of Indian Affairs in that part of the country.

A particular anecdote must be here related. Lady Johnson and her sister, disguised as before mentioned, stopped upon the road at a public-house for a little refreshment. In this house there happened to be a party of rebels, and among them a Major Abell, of the Continentals, who had served Lady Johnson's father in the character of a clerk for many years, and was as well acquainted with her as with a sister of his own. Her Ladyship recognized him the moment she entered the room, and he steadily fixed his eyes on her. And sitting for some time, the Major says: "Your face, Madam, seems very familiar to me, I must have seen you

somewhere." Lady Johnson with great coolness and an amazing presence of mind, answered: "Very like, I lived in New York before the war, my name is Kip. I left it upon the defeat of our army on Long Island, have been in the country ever since, and am going into Jersey to see some relations that live at Newark." The Major asked no further questions, and her ladyship soon took herself away. Whether Abbeel knew her or not is uncertain. She has a countenance not easily to be disguised. If he did really know her, and concealed his knowledge out of friendship to her father, herself, and family, he has great merit, for had he taken and returned her to the Provincial Congress, he would have been most generously rewarded; but as there was, during the war, so little generosity and friendship shown by rebels to loyalists, I suspect he was fairly deceived by a story told by her Ladyship with so much coolness and deliberation. [Compare Maj. Abbeel's conduct with that of James Duane.]

Note XXX. Ibid.—Page 578, etc.

"SCHUYLER'S EXPEDITION TO JOHNSTOWN—HOW IT ORIGINATED AND WAS CARRIED OUT."

On the 30th of December, 1775, a special Committee of Investigation reported to the Continental Congress that "they have received intelligence that a quantity of arms and ammunition and other articles are concealed in Tryon county, in which also there are several Tories armed and enlisted in the enemy's service; whereupon,

"Resolved, That the said Committee be directed to communicate the intelligence to Gen. Schuyler, and in the name of Congress desire him to take the most speedy and effectual measures for securing the said arms and military stores, and for disarming the said Tories and apprehending their chiefs."* (*Journals of Congress*, 1775, p. 310.)

In obedience to this Resolution Schuyler proceeded as stated in the text, being compelled by the want of troops to consult the Albany Committee how to raise them, first, however, swearing that body to secrecy. A letter of Isaac Paris (12), Chairman of the Tryon County Committee, enclosing an affidavit of Jonathan French, Jr., that a woman told him Sir John Johnson was fortifying his house, and had 300 Indians near it, *both subsequently proved false*, arrived during the consultations, and these allegations "were made the ostensible reasons of raising the militia," as Schuyler himself states in his "narrative of that little excursion," as he calls the expedition, from which the following citations are taken, and so excited were the people by them and so great was their effect, that the General says, "I had very near if not quite three thousand men, including nine hundred of the Tryon county militia." The author's statement of 4000 men as his force is, therefore, erroneous, as well as Bancroft's that he had 2000. Schuyler had also an affidavit of one Conner that he was present and *saw arms secreted* in an island in Sir John's duck-pond. This was merely the Cayadutta Creek, running at the foot of the hill on which Johnson Hall stands, which had been dammed and made into an ornamental fish-pond by Sir William Johnson some years before his death.

The Indians living at Caughnawaga, on the Mohawk, five miles from Johnson Hall, were alarmed by the approach of the armed force, and a delegation met Schuyler at Schenectady on the 16th of January, when Abraham, the

Mohawk chief, made him a speech, remonstrating against the invasion as a breach of the treaty of August, 1755, and stating that at Johnson Hall, Sir John was not fortifying, and that all things there remained as they were in the lifetime of Sir William; that they had asked him not to be the aggressor, and assured him if he was, they would pay no more attention to him; that "if our brothers of the United Colonies were the aggressors, we should treat them in the same manner."

"This is what we told Sir John, as we look upon ourselves to be the mediators between both parties." "To which Sir John replied that he knew his disposition very well, and that he had no mind to be the aggressor; he assured us he would not be the aggressor, but if the people came up to take away his life, he would do as well as he could, as the law of nature justified every man to stand in his own defence."

"We beg of you, brothers," Abraham continued, "to remember the engagement that was made with the twelve United Colonies at our interview last Summer, as we then engaged to open the path of peace and to keep it undefiled from blood; at the same time something of a different nature made its appearance. You assured us, brothers, that if any were found in our neighborhood inimical to us, that you would consider them as enemies. The *Six Nations* then supposed that the *son of Sir William* was pointed at by that expression. We then desired particularly that he might not be injured, as it was not in his power to injure the cause, and that therefore he might not be molested."

He also said that some of their warriors were alarmed and ready to take their arms, as they considered the unfriendly disposition of the Colonies verified, and would think themselves deceived if this military force came into their country, and that they were determined to be present at the interview with Sir John; that he, Abraham, had persuaded them "to sit still for two days," till he could go and inquire into the truth of the matter, and bring them an answer. Gen. Schuyler replied that he did not mean to interfere with the Six Nations; that he had "full proofs that many people in Johnstown, and the neighborhood thereof, have for a considerable time past made preparations to carry into execution the wicked designs of the King's evil counsellors; that it was by the special order of Congress that he was marching up to keep the path open, and to prevent the people of Johnstown from cutting off the communication between us and our brethren of the Six Nations and our other brethren living on the river;" that he would "send a letter to Sir John, inviting him to meet us on the road between this place and his house, which, if he does, we make no doubt that everything will be settled in an amicable manner;" and that "he wished their warriors would be present at the interview."

Sir John and some of his Scotch tenants met Schuyler about sixteen miles from Schenectady, pursuant to Schuyler's written request, dated Schenectady, January 16, 1776, in which, after stating that information had been received "that designs of the most dangerous tendency to the rights, liberties, properties, and even the lives of his Majesty's FAITHFUL SUBJECTS (13) in America, who are opposed to the unconstitutional measures of his ministry, have been formed in the County of Tryon," and that he had been ordered by Con-

gress to march troops, "to contravene these dangerous designs;" and wishing to obey his orders so that no blood may be shed, he invites him to meet at any place on his way to Johnstown; and that he and his attendants should pass and repass in safety to his abode upon "my word and honor." The letter was sent by Rutgers Bleecker and Henry Glen, and closes thus: "You will please to assure Lady Johnson that whatever may be the result of what is now in agitation, she may rest perfectly satisfied that no indignity will be offered her."

Lady Johnson was a first cousin once removed of Gen. Schuyler, being Mary, a daughter of Hon. John Watts, of New York, by his wife, Anne (de Lancey), youngest daughter of Etienne de Lancey (the first of this name in America), whose wife and Gen. Schuyler's mother were sisters, both being daughters of Stephanus van Cortlandt.

The first terms proposed by Schuyler, and the counter terms proposed by Sir John, were rejected by each. Schuyler then wrote Johnson to reconsider the matter, and gave him until twelve at night on September [must be January—as above] 18 for an answer.

After the letter was sent, the Indians, sachems called upon Schuyler, stated that Sir John had told them the contents of all the terms offered, and said that "*he only meant to guard himself from insults by riotous people; that he had no unfriendly intentions against the country,*" and begged that his terms might be accepted. Schuyler declined, and told the Indians that if he did not comply by twelve that night he "would force him, and whoever assisted him, to a compliance." They then asked Schuyler in case his answer was not satisfactory, to give him till four A. M., "that they might have time to go to him and shake his head (as they expressed it), and bring him to his senses," which was agreed to.

This original, or rather *aboriginal*, operation, proved not to be necessary, for at the hour first appointed, twelve at night, Sir John's answer came. The next morning Schuyler assented to certain modifications proposed, and the affair was settled without further difficulty.

On the 19th the arms and military stores, "a much smaller quantity than expected," says Schuyler, "were given up." On the 20th the Highlanders, "between two and three hundred," marched to the front and grounded their arms, which were immediately secured. Schuyler, also, chose six of their number as hostages for the rest, pursuant to the terms of the treaty, the chief of whom was Allan McDonald. The same afternoon several field officers and Conner, the maker of the affidavit before mentioned, were sent to the island in the duck-pond, which turned out to be only twenty by twenty-eight feet in size, and about three feet above the water. When they cleared off the snow they found that the ground had not been broken up. They dug down to the water's edge, however, and probed the ground with sticks, swords and other instruments, but they found nothing. *The whole charge was false, and the officers unanimously reported that they were convinced Conner was an impostor*, and he was confined at once as such.

The evening of the 20th Schuyler returned to Caughnawaga; the next day he wrote to Sir John that many of the Scotchmen had broadswords and dirks which had not been delivered up, either from inattention or wilful omission, and that they must comply

with the treaty; adding: "I shall, however, expect an *eclaircissement* on this subject, and beg that you and Mr. McDonald will give it me as soon as may be," and immediately marched back to Johnstown.

As to whether there was any "*eclaircissement*," or any answer or action at all, Schuyler's report is entirely silent. What they did after they got back to Johnstown, as described in the text, the pillaging, etc., is thus mentioned: "I have had much anxiety and an incredible deal of trouble to prevent so large a body of men collected on a sudden, with so little discipline, from running into excesses. I am, however, happy that nothing material has happened that can reflect disgrace on our cause."

On 2d Feb., 1776, Schuyler's narrative was received by the Continental Congress, and on the 5th of the same month they passed resolutions of thanks for the service, (Journals of Congress, 1776, pp. 47, 48, 49,) and that his narrative be published in the newspapers. The curious reader will find it at length in the fourth series of Force's Archives, vol. iv., pages 818 to 829.

It may be stated that the "antipathy," as the text calls it, of Gen. Schuyler and his friends in Albany to the Johnson family, notwithstanding the blood relationship between him and Lady Johnson above mentioned, arose from the Indian trade. The Johnson influence was always, from the first arrival of Sir William in America, in 1738, in favor of the Indians and against the Albany traders, many of whom were the friends and political supporters of Schuyler, and some of them his connections. For the condition of Johnson's tomb as found in 1862, see [Ibid.] Vol. II., page 644.

HISTORY OF NEW YORK DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR. NOTE XXXI.

BY THOMAS JONES, PAGE 585.

Why Sir John Johnson left Johnson Hall—Released from his Parole by Schuyler—Lady Johnson Arrested and kept as a Hostage—Action of Schuyler, Washington, Lady Johnson and the New York Convention—Their Personal and Official Statements—The Births, Marriage and Deaths of Sir John and Lady Johnson.

See volume I., pages 74-81 (as above).

On the 6th March, 1776, one John Collins, a Justice of the Peace, in Tryon county, engaged in raising a company for the American service, took the affidavit of one Asa Chadwick, stating that Sir John Johnson told him he had heard how Collins was employed, which would be worse for them all; that he had sent for the Indians, and they would be down on the back settlements in six weeks and scalp a great many people. This was sent to the Albany Committee (Force's Am. Archives, 4th Series, vol. v., p. 135). It was subsequently found to be as baseless as those charging him with fortifying Johnson Hall and concealing arms on an island in his fishpond (See note xxx. above.)

True or false, the Committee cautiously, on March 11th,

"Resolved, That as Sir John lives out of the county, and is at present under parole to Gen. Schuyler, the said affidavit be laid before him to act thereupon, as he shall see convenient."

Gen. Schuyler, by letter of the 12th, ordered Sir John to Albany to meet his accusers

and answer the charge (Force, Vol. V., p. 196).

On the 19th, Schuyler wrote the President of Congress:

"Sir John Johnson was this day in town agreeable to my request; but his accusers did not appear. He avows that he has reported that the Indians have thrown out threats that they would fall upon us; and says it is notorious to many of our friends in the County of Tryon that they have repeatedly done it.

"I am just now informed that the Indians are already on their way to this place to hold a conference with us. We shall be greatly distressed, as we have nothing to give them." (Force, [Am. Arch.] 446. The affidavits of various persons, given in the same volume, V., pp. 770, 771, prove the truth of Sir John's statement of the general notoriety of the Indian threats in Tryon county).

While these proceedings were being had, the American army was still before Boston. The above letter of Schuyler was written only two days after its evacuation, and before the event was known in Albany.

The driving of the British army from Boston at once stimulated the zeal of the American committees and officers throughout the colonies against their opponents.

Schuyler felt the pressure of the Albany Committee, and determined to seize Sir John Johnson's person. As he held his parole, given in the preceding January, this could only be done by violating it, or releasing him from it. On May 10, just nineteen days after the above interview at Albany, Schuyler wrote Sir John, from Saratoga, that he had no doubt of his hostile intentions against the country, and "it is therefore necessary for the safety of the inhabitants and the weal of the country, that I should put it out of your power to embroil it in domestic confusion, and have, therefore, ordered you a close prisoner, and sent down to Albany, to be thence conveyed to his Excellency, Gen. Washington, *thereby discharging you from your parole.*" (Force, vol. VI., Fourth Series, 643. The italics are the editor's.) Had Schuyler really believed the affidavits and information received from William Duer against Sir John, mentioned in the following letter, he never would have thus formally released him from his parole, for, if true, it was entirely unnecessary.

The letter to Sir John was so be delivered by Col. Dayton, the officer in command of the troops sent to Johnstown, who was directed to arrest him "as soon as he had read it." He was to be released from his parole, and made prisoner, *simultaneously.*

Schuyler's plan is thus given by himself in a letter to Gen. Sullivan, (Force, 641. The italics are the editor's—E. F. de L.)

"SARATOGA, May 14, 1776.

"DEAR SIR.—Some time ago an information on oath was lodged with me against Sir John Johnson, charging him with hostile intentions against us; this has since been confirmed by further information from persons whom I am not at liberty to name.

"Judge Duer, who has taken one of the examinations, and was present at another, will inform you more particularly. This has induced the enclosed order to Col. Dayton, whom I beg you will detach with three hundred of his most alert men to execute this business, and to order the Commissary-General to furnish him with six days' provisions and carriages to convey it, and to prepare to send more if there should be occasion. *It is necessary that Sir John Johnson should not be apprised of their real design, and I*

have, therefore, written him on the subject of removing the Highlanders from Tryon county, which you will please to peruse and seal, and send to him by express the soonest possible.

"I am, &c.,

"PHILIP SCHUYLER.

"To Gen. Sullivan."

This ruse of removing the Highlanders, as the sequel shows, ruined the wily plan.

Schuyler on the 14th wrote Lady Johnson, that he must secure Sir John's person, and that, if she accompanied her husband, all due care and attention should be paid her; but if Sir John wished her to remain, an officer's guard would be left, "to prevent any insult to yourself or your family." (Force, 4th Series, Vol. VI, p. 643.)

On the 18th, Sir John wrote from Johnson Hall to Gen. Schuyler: "Sir, on my return from Fort Hunter, yesterday, I received your letter (Force, 632) by express, acquainting me that the elder McDonald had desired to have all the clan of his name in the county of Tryon removed and subsisted. I know none of that clan but such as are my tenants, and have been for near two years supported by me with every necessity, by which means they have contracted a debt of near two thousand pounds, which they are in a likely way to discharge if left in peace. As they are under no obligation to Mr. McDonald, they refuse to comply with his extraordinary request; therefore, beg there may be no troops sent to conduct them to Albany, otherwise they will look upon it as a total breach of the treaty agreed to at Johnstown. (In January, 1776, as stated in note xxx., McDonald was one of the six prisoners sent under the treaty to Congress as hostages for the Highlanders at that time.) Mrs. McDonald showed me a letter from her husband written since he applied to Congress for leave to return to their families, in which he mentions he was told by the Congress it depended entirely upon you; he then desired that their families might be brought down to them, but never mentioned anything with regard to moving my tenants from hence, as matters he had no right to treat of. (4.) Mrs. McDonald requested that I would inform you that neither herself nor any of the other families would choose to go down." (Force, *Ibid.*, 644.)

Four days previously, however, on the 14th of May, 1776, Schuyler's letters on this business, except that of the 10th to Sir John, are dated May 14, 1776, and with Dayton's report, were sent by him to Washington in a letter of May 31, 1776, the very letter, oddly enough, in which he says that about 100 persons on the New Hampshire Grants, "have had a design to seize me as a Tory, and perhaps still have." (Force, vol. VI., 4th series, p. 641.)

Schuyler had ordered Col. Elias Dayton, with a detachment of his regiment, to repair to Gilbert Tee's inn, at Johnstown, and secure there the Highlanders, men, women and children. This done, the order continued, "You will let Sir John Johnson know that you have a letter from me, which you are ordered to deliver in person, and beg his attendance to receive it. If he comes, as soon as you have delivered the letter and he has read it, you are immediately to make him a close prisoner, and carefully guard him that he may not have the least opportunity to escape." His papers were then to be seized and examined by Dayton and Wm. Duer (Force, 642.) Duer was sent with Dayton as a sort of civil agent. (He was the Wm. Duer who married the youngest daughter of Lord Stirling,

Lady Kitty as she was styled, and the "Judge Duer of the above letter of Schuyler to Sullivan). Copies of any against America were to be forwarded to Schuyler, and Sir John was to be sent to Albany under a strong guard, and Schuyler notified of his arrival. They were to take especial care that nothing whatever of his property was to be injured or destroyed except arms. (15). (Force 4th series, Vol. VI., pp. 447 and 643.)

On the 19th, Dayton arrived at Johnstown, but found, as he himself reports, "that Sir John Johnson had received Gen. Schuyler's letter (about the Highlanders) by the express; that he had consulted the Highlanders upon the contents, and that they had unanimously resolved not to deliver themselves as prisoners, but to go another way, that Sir John Johnson had determined to go with them. (Force, 4th series, Vol. VI., p. 511.)

They and Sir John considered that the treaty of the preceding January, for which their hostages were then in the hands of Congress, had been thus broken by the action of Schuyler, the Albany Committee, and by Congress, and that they were thereby freed from their paroles. Moreover, Schuyler's letter of May 16th, quoted above, expressly says he has discharged Sir John Johnson from his parole. The common charge of historical writers that Sir John broke his parole is therefore without foundation and untrue.

Dayton at once took possession of Johnson Hall. He sent, according to his letter of the 21st, to Schuyler, an officer with a letter to Lady Johnson, informing her of his design, and requesting all the keys. Shortly after, he and two other officers called upon her. She immediately produced all the keys; they searched Sir John's papers and the house, and placed guards all around it. Col. Dayton, thinking the guards about her would be painful, requested her to remove to Albany, where he understood she had friends; but she was averse to it, and he therefore wrote to Schuyler for directions. (Force, 4th Series, Vol. VI., p. 646.)

At this time Lady Johnson was far advanced in pregnancy, and had with her a sister, (15), a young lady, and two small children.

The next day—the 25th—Schuyler writes Dayton: "I think it advisable that Lady Johnson should be moved to Albany without delay, in the most easy and commodious manner to her. You will also move all the Highlanders and their families to that place; this done you will post yourself in the most advantageous place on the Mohawk river to secure that part of the country, and remain there until further orders." (Force, 4th Series, vol. VI., p. 647.)

Lady Johnson was, accordingly, sent down, under the eye of an officer, with her sister, children and servants, to Albany, where she remained with her relatives, Mrs. Judith Bruce, who was by birth Judith Bayard (she married, first, Kilian van Rensselaer, of Greenbush, and, secondly, Dr. Archibald Bruce, R. A.), and Mrs. Stephen de Lancey (who was a niece of Mrs. Bruce, and whose husband was also a first cousin of Lady Johnson), till after her confinement, and until Gen. Schuyler permitted her to leave that city.

[Lt. Ebenezer Elmer, in his Journal, published in the New Jersey Historical Collections, vol. II. (1846-7), page 110, says the "Mayor of Albany is a Tory, and so are many of the inhabitants." Examine page 115-6-7 for jesuitical arguments against Sir John Johnson.]

Schuyler, writing to Washington on June 12, says: "It is the general opinion of people

in Tryon county that whilst Lady Johnson is kept a kind of hostage, Sir John will not carry matters to excess, and I have been entreated to keep her here." Her brother, Robert Watts (Robert Watts was the brother-in-law of Wm. Duer, above mentioned, his wife being "Lady Mary," Lord Stirling's eldest daughter), applied to Washington in her behalf, who was willing she should go to New York, but referred him to Schuyler, who declined to let her depart. On the 15th of June, the day Watts left Albany, he wrote to Schuyler, saying: "Mr. Watts will mention to Gen. Washington the reasons why Gen. Schuyler does not comply with his request for Lady Johnson to go to New York." Schuyler replied he would write Washington himself, and that "you will therefore please not to give yourself the unnecessary trouble of giving Gen. Washington *my reasons*." Watts answered: "As you will not consent to Lady Johnson going to New York, without giving two gentlemen as securities," he, Watts, would like to know, "what engagements they were to be under, as I cannot apply to any gentleman until you inform me." Schuyler closed the correspondence by saying: "As by your former note of this day's date, you seemed altogether to decline entering into such a measure, I have since again given my sentiments to his Excellency, Gen. Washington, on Lady Johnson's situation in a fuller manner than I did in my former letter to him; and I shall not, therefore, proceed any further till I receive his commands." (Force, 4th Series, vol. VI., p. 913.)

The next day Lady Johnson wrote to Washington the following letter, sharply complaining of Schuyler's treatment, and asking to be put under his, Washington's protection:

"ALBANY, June 16th, 1776.

"SIR—I take the liberty of complaining to you, as it is from you I expect redress. I was compelled to leave home much against my inclination, and am detained here by Gen. Schuyler, who, I am convinced, acts more out of ill-nature to Sir John than from any reason that he or I have given him. As I am not allowed to return home, and my situation here made as disagreeable as it can be by repeated threats and messages from Gen. Schuyler, too indelicate and cruel to be expected from a gentleman, I should wish to be with my friends at New York, and would prefer my captivity under your Excellency's protection to being in the power of Gen. Schuyler, who rules with more severity than could be wished by your Excellency's

"Humble servant,

"M. JOHNSON."

[Force, 4th series, vol. VI., p. 930.]

Four days afterwards, on June 20th, 1776, Washington wrote Schuyler from New York, enclosing the Resolves of Congress for the employment of Indians (of 25th May, June 3, and June 6, 1776. Secret Journals of Congress, vol. I., pp. 44, 45, 46), and urging the "most active exertions for accomplishing and carrying the whole into execution with all possible despatch."

[This, from those who so bitterly complained of the employment of Indians, seems a curious piece of casuistic inconsistency.]

A postscript to this letter, dated June 21, says:

"I shall only add, Lady Johnson may remain at Albany till further directions.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"To General Schuyler."

(Force, 4th series, vol. VI., p. 992.)

She remained, therefore, in charge of the Albany Committee until the succeeding December—six months longer.

On the 6th of December Gen. Schuyler wrote them: "If the Committee agree to let Lady Johnson go down, I am sure I have no objections; but no person can be permitted to go to New York without a pass from the General commanding in Westchester county. Her Ladyship should, therefore go to Fishkill, and from thence send for the necessary passport. No ill-treatment I may have received can induce me to forget the laws of decorum and humanity. You will, therefore, if Lady Johnson chooses to be attended by an officer, apply in my name to Col. Gansevoort for one. On your part you will see that she is properly accommodated for her passage." (*Journals Provincial Convention*, vol. II., p. 256.)

The Albany Committee gave her a pass to Fishkill, which she enclosed (as Mrs. Bruce did likewise with a similar pass for herself) by letter of the 15th of December to Pierre van Cortlandt (who was also a first cousin of Lady Johnson's mother, and of Gen. Schuyler), President of the Convention, requesting the favor of a pass "to proceed with Capt. Man to New York." (*Journals Prov. Con.*, vol. II., p. 256.)

The convention was sitting in New York, but soon after adjourned to Fishkill, where they sat in the Church of England edifice. Pierre van Cortlandt laid her request before the convention, which declined to allow her to go to New York, but gave her the choice of a residence, naming four places, the houses of the two gentlemen mentioned in the text, and that of Mr. Barclay, at Walkill, in Ulster county, or to remain in Fishkill. All three gentlemen were her friends and family connections, and she chose Mr. Barclay's, in Ulster county. At Fishkill she had lodgings with Mr. Petrus Bogardus, which Mr. Gouverneur Morris had kindly obtained for her.

Mr. Tappen, (Dr. Christopher Tappen, a brother-in-law of Gov. George Clinton,) of Ulster county, was appointed a committee "to devise means for escorting Lady Johnson to some proper and safe place of residence. He states, in his report, made January 6, 1777, (*Journals Prov. Con.*, vol. I, p. 76), that he went to Mrs. Bogardus' house, but found she had crossed the river the day before he arrived; that your committee likewise crossed the river and overtook Lady Johnson at the house of Col. Jonathan Hasbrouck, where he conferred with her on the subject of her residence, "when she told him that she had chosen the Walkill for two reasons: The season of the year would not permit her three infants travelling far, and second, that she was nearly connected in family with Mr. Barclay, (Thomas H. Barclay, who was the eldest son of Dr. Henry Barclay, of Trinity Church, and whose wife, Susanna de Lancey, was a first cousin of Lady Johnson,) at whose house she intended to put up; that your Committee endeavored, as much as in their power, consistent with the honor of this Convention, to dissuade her from going there. But she being determined to take the advantage of the resolves of this State, your Committee, therefore, at Lady Johnson's request, procured carriages, for which she paid the drivers. And your Committee did in person wait on her and escort her and her family, consisting of her ladyship, three children, Miss Watts, a nurse, one white and one negro servant, to the house lately occupied by Mr. Barclay."

The Convention ordered Mr. Tappen's "bill of expenses in escorting Lady Johnson, amounting to one pound nineteen shillings and nine pence," paid by the secretary and charged to the Convention.

As the *Journal of the New York Convention* from Dec. 14, 1776, to Jan. 1, 1777, is missing, the exact language of the resolutions regarding Lady Johnson cannot be given. Tappen's report, and the author's statement, agreeing generally, show the action, but not the manner of it. Cadwallader Colden and Thomas Barclay lived near each other in the neighborhood of Coldenham, then in Ulster county, now in Orange, and were practically one family; hence the author speaks of Mr. Colden's house in connection with Lady Johnson. Mr. Colden being a relation of both ladies, Mrs. Barclay and Lady Johnson (Mr. Colden and Mrs. Barclay were uncle and niece, the latter's mother, Mrs. Peter de Lancey [J. W. de P.'s grandmother], of West Farms, Westchester county, being Mr. Colden's sister Elizabeth. Mrs. Barclay and Lady Johnson were first cousins, the father of the former, Mr. Peter de Lancey, of West Farms, and the mother of the latter, Mrs. John Watts, of New York (Anne de Lancey), being brother and sister.

The "Major Abeel," whom Lady Johnson so strangely encountered while escaping to New York, as stated on page 81 (17), was James, son of David Abeel, of the old New York family of that name, and Mary Duyckinck, his wife. In early life a clerk in the counting-house of John Watts, of New York, Lady Johnson's father, he entered the army at the outbreak of the war as a Captain in Lasher's regiment in the New York service, became Major, Colonel and Deputy Quartermaster-General, and was also on Washington's Staff at Morristown. He married Gertrude Neilson, of New Jersey, and died at the house of his son David, at New Brunswick, N. J., April 25th, 1825, at the ripe age of 93. (*MS. letter of his grandson, the Rev. Gustavus Abeel, D. D., of Newark, N. J.*)

It may interest the reader to know that Sir John Johnson was born on the 5th of November, 1742, and died at his residence at St. Mary's, Montreal, on Monday, January 4th, 1830, in the 88th year of his age, and was buried on the 8th in the family vault at Mount Johnson (named after the first house Sir William built on the Mohawk), on the south side of the St. Lawrence, near Montreal. Lady Johnson was born in New York, 29th October, 1753, and died at Montreal, August 7th, 1815, in her 61st year, and was buried by her husband in the vault at Mount Johnson. They were married in New York in 1773.

J. W. DE P.'S NOTES ON PRECEDING.

The attention of impartial readers is particularly invited to the following observations: 1. The original charges against Sir John were made by a "woman" and "both subsequently proved false." 2. Schuyler terms himself and his associates "faithful subjects of his Majesty." What right had "faithful subjects," if truly so and not unfaithful subjects, to arrest his Majesty's officer, who assured the former that "he only meant to guard himself from insults by riotous people," who afterwards outraged him, robbed him and drove him forth and confiscated his property to reward his real fidelity to the crown. 3. Lady Johnson was assured that "whatever may be the results * * * no indignity will be offered her." Contrary to this pledge she was subsequently arrested, removed, placed under guard, and held as a hostage for over six months. [See

New Jersey Historical Collections, Vol. III., (1848-9), of Gov. (Loyal) William Franklin, only son of (Rebel) Benjamin Franklin, pages 139-159, as to "faithful subjects" and their treatment.]

A large number of the instigators, like Tom Paine, and abettors of the rebellion or revolution, were foreigners, and one of Sir John's bitterest persecutors, Isaac Paris, who fell at Oriskany, was an Englishman by birth. Out of the twenty-nine Continental Major-Generals—in reality twenty-three, for one resigned immediately, two were out of the service before the war was half over, two became Major-Generals in 1782, after it was virtually ended, and one was Arnold—nine were foreigners, three English, two Irish, two French, and two German.

The Protestant Scotch-Irish (not the Roman Catholic Irish-born) furnished a large number of officers and officials to the Revolutionary party. As for Herkimer (to follow the ordinary or popular spelling of his name), whatever may have been his virtues, he was a most illiterate man. "Old Put" (Maj-Gen. Putnam), with all his lack of education and capacity, was accomplished in comparison. Witness Herkimer's letter or order published *verbatim* by Lossing, the historian. Time and research are revealing a multitude of facts with regard to the standing, ability, enlightenment and other qualities of the Revolutionary sires, and by no means, in the majority of cases, to their advantage.

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

GEN. SCHUYLER TO LADY JOHNSON.

SARATOGA, May 14, 1776.

MADAM:

Mr. Duer, who is good as to take charge of this, will advise you of the pain Sir John's conduct has occasioned me, and how much I have been distressed at the sad necessity which obliges me to secure his person. He will also inform you how much I have suffered on his account last Winter. But altho' he has forgot the obligations he lays under to me, yet his usage will be such as if he had not, for I am incapable of prostituting my office to Resentment. [See Lady Johnson's letter to Washington as an offset to this meekness.]

I entreat you therefore to make yourself perfectly easy on that head. Should you choose to accompany or follow Sir John, all the care and attention will be paid you which is due to your rank and sex. But if Sir John chooses that you should remain, an officer's guard will be left, if required, to prevent any insult that might be offered by imprudent or malicious people to yourself or family.

I am, etc.,

PH. SCHUYLER.

[See Schuyler's letter of 19th September, 1776, as to plundering, and Lt. Elmer's admissions in his journal, published by the New Jersey Historical Society, Vol. II., 1846-7. Pages 121, etc.]

[From the Schuyler Mss.]

SCHUYLER TO GEN. SULLIVAN.

SARATOGA, May 14, 1776.

DR. SIR—Some time ago an Information on Oath was lodged with me against Sir John Johnson, charging him with hostile intentions against us; this has since been confirmed by other information from persons whom I am not at liberty to name. Judge Duer, who has taken one of the examinations and was present at another, will inform you more particularly. This information has induced the in-

closed order to Col. Dayton, whom I beg you will detach with 300 of his *most alert* men to execute this business and to order the Commissary-General to furnish him with six days' provisions and carriage to convey it; and prepare to send more if there should be occasion.

It is necessary that Sir John Johnson should not be apprized of their real design, and I have, therefore, wrote him on the subject of moving the Highlanders from Tryon county, which you will please to peruse, seal, and send to him by express the soonest possible. I am, etc.,

PH. SCHUYLER.

[Will any unprejudiced reader aver that the above is otherwise than the bait of a trap?]

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

SCHUYLER TO VOLKERT P. DOUW, ESQ.

SARATOGA, May 14, 1776.

Dear Sir—Having received information, supported by affidavits, that Sir John Johnson, slighting the engagements he entered into with me last winter, is making hostile preparations. It is my duty to put it out of his power to carry them into execution by securing his person, for which I have given orders, as likewise for the removal of the Highlanders on request of their chief Mr. McDonald, *the latter will be the excuse given for the march of the troops to Johnstown*, that they may not be insulted by imprudent people.

[Mrs. McDonald and the Highlanders did not desire to be removed, and McDonald had no right to make any request on the subject at point marked (H).]

These intended operations will make it indispensably necessary that you should immediately inform the Mohawks, that some troops are going to Johnstown, but that no evil will thence result to them, and it is also absolutely necessary that you and Mr. Yates should move up with the troops, and as soon as Sir John is apprehended, inform the Indians, as well the other Indians as the Mohawks of the reasons which occasioned it, and which will be given by Mr. Duer, who took one of the affidavits and who was present at the examination of another person.

I need not recommend that the greatest secrecy is necessary. Your own good judgment will point that out.

I am, Dear Sir, etc.

PH. SCHUYLER.

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

SCHUYLER TO SIR JOHN JOHNSON, BARONET.

SARATOGA, May 14, 1776.

SIR—After candidly scanning, coolly considering and comparing the variety of information which invites to you the most hostile intentions against the country, I could have wished for the sake of human nature to have found them groundless; unhappy they are too well supported by the testimony even of those who were intrusted with the secret of your intended operations, and whose remorse(!) has incline them to a full discovery, as not to leave doubt upon my mind that you have acted contrary to the sacred engagement you lay under to me and through me to the public. It is, therefore, necessary for the public safety of the inhabitants and the weal of the country that I should put it out of your power to embroil it in domestic confusion, and have therefore ordered you to be made a close prisoner (hereby discharging you from your parole) and sent down to Albany, to be thence conveyed to his Excellency, Gen. Washington. But influenced by and acting upon principles

which will never occasion a remorse of conscience, I have at the same time ordered that no insult shall be offered to *your person or family*, and that your property should be guarded and secured with a scrupulous attention. For, sir, American commanders engaged in the cause of liberty remain uninfluenced by the savage and brutal example, which has been given them by the British troops in wantonly setting on fire the *buildings of individuals* and otherwise destroying their property.

I am, sir, your humble servant,

PH. SCHUYLER.

[See Schuyler's letter to Lady Johnson, admitting the plundering of her property, and Col. Dayton's admissions. New Jersey Historical Collections. Vol. ii. (1846-7), pages 120-1-2.]

["Toronto was founded in the Spring of 1794 by [Loyalist Lieut.-Gen. John Graves] Simcoe, and was named York, a name which was changed in 1834 to that which it now bears, being one given to the spot by the Indians, and signifying in their tongue 'the place of meeting.' Its progress was not very rapid at first. During the war which the United States waged between 1812 and 1815 it was occupied by the troops of that country, and its *public buildings were burnt to the ground. This was done by the express orders of the United States government, the declared purpose being that the innocent inhabitants of Upper Canada might be made to suffer as severely as possible.*"

Were these severities directed against this particular district on account of the manner in which it was settled? The following may explain the virulence which dictated the order and the violence with which it was executed: "Some of the best blood of the settlers in the Province of Ontario flowed in the veins of the United Empire [American] Loyalists, and still flows in those of their successors. Having been expelled from their ancestral possessions in the United States, they found a new and undisturbed home in the Province over which the flag of Great Britain waved. The country was then a wilderness, and existence was a toil. The settlers were inspired with an idea which emboldened and nerved them amidst their sufferings and labors. *They had been forced to leave their native homes because they would not help or sanction the disruption of an Empire which glorified and widened the dominion of their race, even though it were indisputable that its temporary rulers had failed in understanding and fulfilling their duties. It is now admitted, when too late, that these Loyalists were men of high principle and lofty aspirations, and none regrets their punishment more sincerely than the descendants of those persons who thought themselves the friends of their country in inflicting it. Few things are more certain than the fact that, if the United Empire Loyalists had been suffered to remain in the United States, the foundation of Upper Canada would never have been laid, and that the annexation of this portion of the continent to the United States would have been effected soon after the consolidation of the Republic.*"

Columbia and Canada Notes on the Great Republic and the New Dominion. A supplement to "Westward by Rail," by W. Fraser Rae. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1879, p. 215.]

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

SCHUYLER TO WM. DUER, ESQ.:

FORT GEORGE, May 25, 1776.

DEAR SIR—Your favor of yesterday was delivered me at eleven this morning. I am exceedingly sorry that Sir John has escaped us. I have ordered Lady Johnson to be moved to Albany, that she may be in a place of safety and incapable of giving intelligence to her husband. I am of opinion with you that the families of the German Tories, who have gone off with Sir John, should also be moved; but this is a matter in which the committee must be consulted, and if they approve of it, Col. Dayton will send them off.

I am ill with the ague and overburdened with business. Adieu. Yours most sincerely, etc.,

PH. SCHUYLER.

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

SCHUYLER TO MR. ROBERT WATTS.

ALBANY, 15th June, 1776.

SIR—You cannot fail of recollecting what engagements I expected the gentlemen should enter into, who might become security, but as by your former note of this day's date you seemed altogether to decline entering into such a measure, I have since again given my sentiments to his Excellency Gen. Washington on Lady Johnson's situation in a manner more full and explicit than I did in my former Letter to him, and I shall therefore, not proceed any farther until I receive his commands. I am, sir, your humble servant,

PH. SCHUYLER.

SAME TO SAME.

ALBANY, June 15th, 1776.

SIR—I have received your note and shall take the earliest opportunity of advising Gen. Washington of the reasons which induce me not to permit Lady Johnson to leave Albany on any other terms than what I proposed to you. You will therefore please not to give yourself the unnecessary trouble of giving Gen. Washington my reasons. I am, sir, your humble servant,

PH. SCHUYLER.

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

SCHUYLER TO LADY JOHNSON.

ALBANY, Sept. 19, 1776.

MADAME—Your letter of the 18th was delivered me near two o'clock this afternoon.

When Mr. Glen applied in your name requesting that you might be permitted to return to Johnson Hall, I gave my consent, provided the committee should approve it. I wrote to them on the subject and they were unanimously of opinion that your request ought not to be granted. I am bound to conform to their opinion, although it was by my order that I (you) was removed to this place; an order of which I can never repent, any more than that which I gave, that no part of Sir John's property should be injured or his person insulted; an attention which, however, he was not entitled to, when I was at the very time informed of his designs against me and mine.

The breach of my orders in plundering the Hall, has already been punished by the breaking of one officer, and others who are supposed to be concerned will be tried as soon as the witnesses which are sent for arrive from Fort Stanwix.

I am your Ladyship's humble servant,

PH. SCHUYLER.

[From the Schuyler MSS. Extract.]

SCHUYLER TO WASHINGTON.

ALBANY, June 15th, 1776.

DEAR GENERAL—"It is the general opinion of the people in Tryon county and here that whilst Lady Johnson is kept a kind of hostage, Sir John (who can by means of the Mohawks receive intelligence from her as often as she may please to send it) will not carry matters to excess, and I have been entreated to keep her here; but as it was a matter of delicacy when Mr. Watts delivered me your Excellency's letter, I proposed that security should be given that Lady Johnson should be forthcoming when called upon, and besides the above reasons, I was the more induced to this request, as I am informed, from good authority, that she exults in the prospect she has of soon hearing that Sir John will ravage the country on the Mohawk river. Mr. Watts declined giving any security and soon after wrote me a note, a copy of which, with copy of my answer I enclose, and afterwards a second, which I also answered as you will see by the inclosed. I find that since it has been hinted that she is a good security to prevent the effects of her husband's violence that she is very anxious to go down, and which induces me to wish to keep her here."

I am Dear Sir, with every friendly wish, etc.

PH. SCHUYLER.

[From the Schuyler MSS.]

SCHUYLER TO THE COMMITTEE OF ALBANY.

ALBANY, Sept. 15, 1776.

GENTLEMEN—Lady Johnson has just now applied to me, by Mr. Cornelius Glen, for a permit to return to Johnson Hall. He has observed that she is far advanced in her pregnancy, and that it will be very inconvenient for her to lay in here. Altho' I see no reason for refusing to comply with her request, I would wish to be favored with the opinion of the Committee, and entreat they will give it me. I am, etc.,

PH. SCHUYLER.

IN REGARD TO ROUTES THROUGH THE ADIRONDACK WILDERNESS.

In the address itself allusion is made to Sir John's escape from Johnstown to Canada. The route he followed has never been explicitly demonstrated. Recent discoveries of skeletons (one in particular last Summer, 1879) shows that there must have been tracks through the northern wilderness of New York, which were once well known to the Indians, trappers, "prospectors" and frontier guides, of which the knowledge has been lost for generations. The route along the course of West Canada Creek, by which, after a march Southward of twenty-two days, the French and Huron Indians precipitated themselves on a midwinter's midnight, 8th February, 1690, upon Schenectady, was not the track northward, followed by Sir John in mid-May, 1776. Watson, in his "History of Essex County," N. Y., note 3, pages 31-2, remarks of the opinion entertained in regard to the West Canada Creek route, it "is opposed to the generally received idea that this road was along the line of Lake Champlain. A route by West Canada Creek implies an avenue of communication between Canada and the Mohawk Valley different from that afforded by the usual line traversed by the French, either from Oswego or by the way of Lake Champlain. The route mentioned possibly had a terminus on the St. Lawrence, near the mouth of the Black river. Writers constantly advert to the use of such an intermediate channel;

but their attention does not seem to have been directed to its locality or character. Sir John Johnson, it is stated, when he violated his parole [a falsehood], and fled with the mass of his tenantry to Canada, consumed nineteen days, with great exposure and suffering, in traversing the wilderness by some *interior* line, known to him and the Indians. But no further light is thrown upon a question which, to my mind, is invested with much geographical and historical interest. I will venture the presumption that at this period *more than one familiar route* had been established through the vast primeval forests which embrace the western confines of Essex county, which still exist essentially in their original gloom and solitudes. No other route would have been available, when both Oswego and Champlain, as often occurred, were in the occupation of a hostile power. The valleys of the streams which flow into the Mohawk and Hudson, and which almost mingle their waters with the affluents of the St. Lawrence, might have been ascended, and the lakes and rivers of the wilderness may have been used with great facility for a canoe navigation. A few trifling 'carrying places' would have interposed only slight impediments, and when closed by the frosts of Winter, these waters could still afford a most favorable route of communication. Other avenues through this wilderness were undoubtedly accessible, but my own observation has suggested one which I will trace. The upper valley of the Hudson may have been penetrated, until the line is reached of a small branch, which starting from the lakes in the vicinity of the 'Adirondack Works,' finds its way to the Hudson. Passing up the valley along which this stream gradually descends, the inaccessible range of mountains would be avoided. Thence traversing the 'Indian Pass' in nearly an imperceptible ascent, the plains of North Elba would be reached, and these open upon the vast plateau of the wilderness, along which the Racket rolls a gentle current, adapted to the Indian canoe, to the St. Lawrence. This idea possibly explains the origin of the modern name which has been assigned to the wonderful structures known to the natives as 'Otneqarh,' 'the place of stony giants.'

"Gentlemen of great intelligence and careful observation have assured me that they have noticed evidences in the wilderness of other ancient pathways disclosed by still open tracks, the vestiges of rude bridges and the mouldering remains of coarsely hewn vehicles calculated for manual transportation."

JERSEY CITY HEIGHTS, Jan. 8 1880.

DEAR SIR—In reply to your letter asking for some particulars in regard to *Crane Mountain* in connection with Sir John Johnson's route from *Baboyaga Bay* in *Lake Champlain* to *Cherry Valley*, I would say that my attention was first called to it in the Fall of 1852, while on a deer-stalking expedition in the Adirondacks, by an old hunter, who had often been surprised at such evidences of careful military work in places where he supposed white feet had never trodden until a comparatively recent date. A careful examination was thereupon undertaken by me resulting in the conclusion that Johnson's raid either was by no means so precipitate as has hitherto been believed, or else that he had with him a skilled engineer with men under him who were accustomed to work with great celerity.

Although the road is now overgrown with

bushes and scrub timber, yet a very little observation reveals a well made corduroy road underneath (still in excellent preservation) with the gap in the forest where the primeval trees were cut down for the road. This road, coming down from the valley of the Bouquet and Schroon rivers, meets the base of Crane Mountain at its northwestern side, and following around the base of the mountain leaves it on its southeastern point, and goes off in a well-defined trail to the Sacandaga. Thence crossing that stream it is lost in the forest in a bee line to the Fish House, Johnstown, and the Cherry Valley settlement.

It is, I may remark here, a great mistake to imagine that the whites were the first to know this region—the truth being that all this wilderness was as well known to the Iroquois, not to speak of previous races, as one's own library is to its owner. Crane Mountain at the present time (not so much from its height, though it is a high mountain, as from its peculiar position in the Adirondack chain) can be seen from any direction within a radius of seventy miles. Crane Mountain was, of course, as prominent a landmark in 1780 as it is now, and in descending from the Valley of the Schroon, it was undoubtedly seen and seized upon as a point to make for, on Johnson's way to the Sacandaga. Indeed, it has been made the base of the trigonometrical survey of the northern section of New York State. I am sincerely rejoiced that Sir John Johnson has at length found so able a defender as yourself, and I remain,

Yours cordially,

WM. L. STONE.

MAJ.-GEN. J. WATTS DE PEYSTER.

SIR JOHN JOHNSON'S FIRST INROAD IN MAY, 1780.

In the Spring of 1780, Sir John Johnson organized, at Ticonderoga, a band of about five hundred men, composed of Regulars, a party of his own corps of "Royal Greens," and two hundred Tories and Indians, and proceeded on an errand, [of retaliation into the Mohawk Valley.]

"Penetrating the rude wilderness of mountains, forests and waters, which spreads westward from Lake George, he reached and ascended the valley of the Sacandaga. This route compelled him to cross a site which his father in happier days was accustomed often to visit in pursuit of relaxation and rural pastimes. * * *

"He passed onward, unchanged in his fierce designs, to descend at midnight upon his native valley in a whirlwind of rapine and flame. * * *

A common and indiscriminate ruin involved all who had adhered to the republican cause. * * * There was nothing left in a wide track along the beautiful valley of the Mohawk, where yesterday stood the abodes of plenty, but a mass of ashes, slaked with blood. The professed object of this pitiless incursion was the recovery of a mass of valuable plate, which a faithful slave had assisted to bury in 1776. With silent and unwavering fidelity he had watched over the deposit, although in the confiscation of the Johnson estate he had been sold to another master. The plate was recovered and distributed in the knapsacks of forty different soldiers. By this means it was all safely conveyed into Canada. An alarm had been immediately sounded, and the local militia, under Col. Harper, beginning to assemble, Sir John made a rapid retreat. He bore with him what plunder he was able to convey, and forty prisoners; and reaching his bateaux

at Crown Point, returned to Canada in safety, successfully evading the pursuit of Gov. Clinton aided by detachments from the New Hampshire Grants.

Maj. Carlton, in the Autumn of the same year, proceeded from St. John's with a formidable fleet, conveying more than 1,000 men, * * * and on the 10th and 11th of October, with a trifling loss, captured Fort Ann and Fort George. He completely devastated the country along his line of march; but the marked exemption of the territory of Vermont from these ravages were calculated to excite jealousy and apprehension. * * *

At this epoch was initiated the *enigmatical and extraordinary relations*, which subsisted for several years between the British authorities in Canada and the government of Vermont. The people of the New Hampshire Grants had formally declared their independence in 1777, and under the name of Vermont had assumed the attitude and prerogatives of a sovereign State. Any discussion of the character of these relations, a subject that has so nearly baffled all distinct and satisfactory explanation, is foreign to our purpose. * * * A glance at the peculiar posture of Vermont in her domestic and public affairs is necessary, in order to approach a just appreciation of the ambiguous policy of her leaders at this juncture. A difference of opinion even yet exists in legal minds in reference to the legitimacy of the claims of New York upon the New Hampshire Grants. Whatever may have been the strength or validity of these claims, it is certain that a deep and bitter hostility towards New York was the all-pervading feeling of the heroic and independent [sic] people who occupied the territory in dispute. This sentiment was stimulated by the sincere conviction that these claims were unjust, and that Vermont had endured great wrong from the grasping injustice and oppression of her more powerful neighbor. To * * * escape the political absorption which they believed was contemplated by New York, was the inexorable determination of the remarkable body of men, who at that period guarded [guide.] the policy of Vermont. With them, the purpose was paramount to every other consideration. The devotion of these leaders, in common with all the population of the Grants, to the cause of American Independence, through all the early vicissitudes of the contest, had been active and ardent.

The over-ruling law of self-preservation, the astute statesmen of Vermont alleged, justified and even demanded a resort to extraordinary measures, and such as would be warranted by no common emergencies. Their apologists *now* aver that these men designed, by shrewd diplomacy, to shield the State from the overwhelming assaults of the British army lying upon its borders, and at the same time to secure an ultimate protection from the aggressions of New York. At this time in the light of later disclosures [?] the position will scarcely be controverted, that it was their fixed and deliberate purpose if the exigency arose of deciding in the choice of two evils, to return to a colonial dependence, fortified "by safe and honorable terms" rather than submit to the power of New York. The same determination was avowed by Gov. Chittenden in 1781, in his official correspondence with Washington.

(The Military and Civil History of the County of Essex, N. Y., &c., embracing an account of the Northern Wilderness, &c., by Winslow C. Watson, Albany, N. Y., 1869.)

PROOFS CONSIDERED

IN CONNECTION WITH THE VINDICATION OF

SIR JOHN JOHNSON, BART.,

BEING A SECOND APPENDIX TO

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING,
TUESDAY, 6TH JANUARY, 1880.

BY J. WATTS DE PEYSTER, BREV. MAJ.-GEN. S. N. Y., L. L. D., F. R. H. S., &c.

Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society, Vol. ii., 1846-1847,
Pages 115-122, 127, 128.

[EXTRACTS FROM A]

Journal kept during an Expedition to Canada in 1776; by Ebenezer Elmer, Lieutenant in the Third Regiment of New Jersey in the Continental service, commanded by Col. Elias Dayton. Printed from the original manuscript. Presented to the [N. J.] Historical Society by the Hon. L. Q. C. Elmer, of Bridgeton.

"*Tuesday, May 21st, 1776.*—Johnstown lies in Tryon County [now capital of Fulton county], New York Government, forty-five miles W. N. W. of Albany, four miles [N. from Erie Canal and] from the Mohawk River, between the *Upper*, called Fort Hunter, and the *Lower*, called Fort Hendricks, *Mohawk Castle*, twelve miles from Sonondag [Sacondag]; from thence a creek communicates with the North River, and from thence there is a communication to Canada by land." * * * "By examination of several persons, Whigs and Tories, it appears that Sir John [Johnson] can raise of his own tenants about 300 Scots and as many Dutch and Irish; that they have arms and ammunition. The town contains about 30 houses, mostly small half stories. The country round the town is fertile, and would, by proper cultivation, produce abundantly. It is well situated (connecting the North and Mohawk rivers), to tamper with the Indians, to connect Tories below with those above, and in case we [Rebels] should be importunate on either side to fall upon us, or the weaker party, cut off our retreat, and take advantage of the fluctuating passions of mankind, that any circumstances might be improved against us. It is very evident Sir John's tenants are against us from the very circumstance of their being tenants, and otherwise in debt to Sir John and dependant on him."

[This method of argument is simply ridiculous. The easiest course for Sir John's debtors would have been to join the Revolutionary party, and by this "new way to pay old debts" cancel all their obligations and sacrifice the son and daughters of their benefactor. The Debtors, however, being honest men, rejected the Jesuitic arguments of their tempters, elected to abide by their agreements and stand by their creditor, and paid not only "the last full measure of devotion" to the crown, but pay their pecuniary obligations to the Baronet. The Revolutionaries, having failed in their own sense of duty, seemed to see all things through the medium of their perverted ideas of right and wrong, even to a total obliviousness of their own fallacious logic and criminal estimate of sincerity and loyalty.]

"Till these circumstances are altered, they cannot be our friends. There appears to be but two ways of procuring this country in our interest: The one to keep a garrison here to support the Whigs and molest the Tories; the other in planting Whigs in the room of Tories." [It is a pity the victorious North did not act on this principle towards the Southern rebels after the surrender at Appomattox Court House in 1865.]

Johnstown, May 22d, 1776.—I was early this morning directed, by Col. Dayton, to take a file of men and go to Johnson Hall with my side arms only, and wait on Lady Johnson, [born Mary Watts, daughter of John Watts of N. Y.,] with a letter—the substance of which was to demand the keys of the hall and drawers in the room—with directions for her immediately to pack up her clothes and go to Albany, that an officer and guard should wait on her there if she chose. I went to the Hall accordingly, and after directing the Sergeant of my guard to place sentries around the Hall, I asked for her ladyship,

who was then in bed, and after waiting an hour she came into the parlor. I gave her the letter, with assuring her it gave me great pain, I was under the disagreeable necessity of delivering her a letter that must give her ladyship a great deal of uneasiness, and which my duty obliged me to do in obedience to the order of my superior officer. She hastily broke open the letter and immediately burst into a flood of tears, which affected me so I thought proper to leave her alone. After some time she sent for me, composed herself, ordered the keys of the Hall to be brought in and given to me, and which I desired might lie on the table until the Colonel came. After which I breakfasted with her ladyship and Miss Chew. After breakfast Col Dayton, Lieut.-Col. White and Maj. Barber came, and we, in the presence of her ladyship and Miss Chew, examined every room and every drawer in Johnson Hall, which is a very beautiful, large and elegant building, with two forts built last war, about half a mile from town, on a small eminence, with two fine streams of water about forty rods on each side of the Hall. I had a view of Sir Wm. Johnson's picture, which was curiously surrounded with all kinds of beads of Wampun, Indian curiosities and trappings of Indian finery, which he had received in his treaties with the different Indian nations—curiosities sufficient to amuse the curious; indeed this search gave me an opportunity of fully satisfying my curiosity in seeing everything in Johnson Hall. We saw all Sir William's papers of all the treaties he had made with the different Indian nations, with medals of various sorts sent him from Europe and others, which he distributed at his treaties to the Indians, &c., with innumerable testimonials, &c.; which showed SIR WM. JOHNSON'S *character in every important station of life, and that he merited, greatly merited the warmest thanks of his country.* [This beats the casuistry of the Puritans of England and Scotland towards such Loyalists as the martyr Montrose.]

"But when we reflected on Sir John's (his son's) conduct, it afforded a contrast not to be equalled. Whilst we admired and commended the wisdom, prudence, patriotic spirit, valor and bravery of the father, we could but detest and discommend the foolish, imprudent, treacherous and base conduct of the son, [new terms for Loyalty and Honor!] who, instead of walking in the paths of his good old father in supporting liberty, [something of which Sir William alive had heard nothing, and of which he in his grave could express no opinion,] and thereby meriting the applause of his country, has basely endeavored, and is endeavoring, to destroy the liberty and property of his native country, [What country? The Empire of Great Britain, to which he owed his gratitude, duty, Baronetcy and fortune, or the revolted Colonies, of which, being dead, he could know nothing, and to whose people he owed nothing?] and to cut the throats of those who feared, lived and fought under the command of his valiant father; and who now (with a degree of tenderness and respect) are obliged to search the Hall, built by the good old, industrious Baronet, to discover and detect the young profligate Knight's treachery. [To apply this term 'profligate' to Sir John is not only an outrage but a stupid abuse of language. Sir John was a model husband, father, son and subject, against whom not the slightest charge of profligacy can be breathed.

In one sense it might apply to Sir William, who, in the strict signification of the word, was neither nice nor restrained in his pursuit of sensual enjoyment, however great in his strict performance of the duties of an officer, official and business man.] The Committee refused having anything to do with Lady Johnson until they heard what directions Gen. SCHUYLER should give concerning her. He almost acquired the supremacy over the people here, though *at the same time they do not like him*; but being in authority and a smart man *withal*."

Albany, May 30, 1776.—Towards evening, Lieut. Hagan and Volunteer Kinney, of our Company, came to town, walking all the way up from Types Hill, near forty miles, to-day. * * * * We are informed that a party of our men at Sir John's, being informed that a number of Col. Butler's Indians, &c., were coming down to join Charlton at Quebec, went out in an escorting party to waylay them as they came down; that they had an engagement by which many were killed and wounded on each side, but the particular place or situation of the affair is not yet known. Breakfasted this morning with one Mr. Halstead, who had fled with his wife and six children from Quebec just as our men retreated from there. He left behind him in possession of the Tories all his estate, consisting of £500 sterling worth of rum, besides other things of great value. He informed that all our friends had shared the same fate with him in losing all their effects. It would, he says, have been a very easy matter last Winter to have taken the town; and even now, although it is much stronger, three or four hundred might effect the stroke, but thinks if they neglect it much longer, especially if more troops arrive, it will be almost impracticable. Not more than 200 troops arrived at farthest when our men retreated, but we being small and out of heart, could not pretend to withstand them. Lodged at Mr. Willett's all night.

Albany, May 31, 1776.—Clear bright morning. Arrived here about 8 o'clock, Lieuts. Turtle, Loyd, Hazlitt and Earsign Hennion, with some of the men to take up our baggage and other affairs to Johnstown. * * * About busy settling matters and preparing for marching to-morrow. The people of this place, we understand, have sent in a petition to Gen. Schuyler to have us in and about this town for the security of the place; but I think it not likely their petition will be granted, as we must be more wanted in other places.

Saturday, June 1st, 1776.—Wet morning for marching, so that we were long *parleying about the matter*. However, it slackening in some manner, we began to prepare for marching; and having all things in readiness about 4 o'clock P. M. Ensign Hennion and self set out from Albany with Cpts. Dickinson, Potter and Bloomfield's baggage and *deserters*, and marched on our way for Johnstown. Just at evening we arrived at an Inn, 11 miles, at a place called Cripple Bush. The country thus far is sandy and some low cripples, with little other timber growing but pines, and those very low and scrubby; much like the country on Egg Harbor [New Jersey]. Some few houses along on the road and all public ones. Lodged on the floor. Expenses 2s. 9d.

Sunday, June 2d, 1776.—Set out early in the morning on our march, the morning dull and heavy. Just as we arrived at Schenectady, which is 16 miles from Albany, it began to

rain very hard and we got very wet; however, having got our wagons and prisoners safe, went to a tavern and got our breakfast. Schenectady is a very fine village, lying on the east side of Mohawk river, with a large number of stately buildings. At 10 o'clock ferried over and proceeded on up the river within the valley on the river; towards evening one of our wagons gave out just at the house of [Colonel] Guy Johnson, [British Superintendent of Indian Affairs and successor of his uncle and father-in-law, Sir William Johnson; he married Sir John's sister:] a very neat and elegant building, very curiously finished off, now lying in a desolate condition, whilst its owner is in England doing all in his power against his country. [Another ridiculous charge. Col. Guy's allegiance was due to the Crown of England, not to its revolted colonists.] It lies about eleven or twelve miles from Johnstown. Proceeded up as far as Col. Cloas' (who is now in Canada.) [another son-in-law of Sir William] which is about one mile farther up, where we put up to stay all night—the dwellers being Irish tenants, frankly opened the doors and let us have what rooms we pleased. After settling matters, I took a walk into the garden, where, among curious affairs, is a philosophical engine, which by a pipe underground, conveys the water into the kitchen and then into the garden, where is an iron spout, which is plugged up, and when taken out the water spouts out with a velocity equal to carry it three perches. In the evening Lieut. Tuttle came up with us and lodged on the floor.

Monday, June 3d, 1776.—Being flushed for want of a wagon, prevented our setting out till about 8 o'clock, when we proceeded on to Types Hill, where we stopped. When we rise the hill our course turns to the north and the river to the west, so that we have the river on our left hand. The country here is exceedingly rich and full of timber, which makes it very bad clearing; but if it was properly cultivated, would produce grass, &c., in abundance. About 12 o'clock we arrived at *Johnstown*, which consists of one street only, and a number of small houses with a *fine large Church and Court House*, [built by Sir William.] About a quarter of a mile on the northwest side of the town stands Johnson's Hall, a very neat building with many outhouses, from which he has run off with his brood of Tories, leaving the whole in our hands. P. M. By virtue of a Proclamation, issued out by Col. Dayton, Commander-in-Chief here, all the Tories appeared and were confined in the Court House, and all their names taken, Scotch, Irish, German or American, who stood disaffected [discontented] with the measures [revolt] the Colonies are now following, many of which are tenants to Sir John, which circumstance of itself must be sufficient to prove them Tories, [another nice line of argument], as most of them are indebted to him. [Any one who will reflect on this foolish man's remarks must arrive at two results—First, the loyalty of debtors who remained faithful to their duty and obligations; when, second, they could pay all their debts by deserting their creditor and becoming glorious patriots or communists.] There were about 100 Tories, as near as I can guess, tho' I have not seen the list since it was complete. Some of which, however, upon giving security, entering bonds, &c., were dismissed. How very different it is from being here and in our own country [New Jer-

sey]. Noise and tumult is all we have, and expecting daily and hourly, if Sir John has a sufficient number, to be attacked—that we are obliged to keep constantly upon our guard. Received certain intelligence that Gen. Arnold with a reinforcement have been up to the Cedars on the St. Lawrence for the relief of our men who were defeated there, and ran upon Col. Butler's army, cut them off and took them all prisoners. God grant it may be true.

Johnstown, Tuesday, June 4th, 1776.—Cloudy morning. We appeared out upon parade at 9 o'clock. I went in company at 11 o'clock with Major Hubbell, an Engineer with us, Lieuts. Gifford and Hagan to *Johnson's Hall*. We took a view of the out-buildings, but did not go into the Hall; but we were admitted into the office by the officer of the guard, in which is a large number of books and various kinds of writing. *Many of the officers have taken more or less from there of books, as well as other affairs of considerable value.* At six o'clock I had to mount guard, which consists of a captain, first and second lieutenants and ensign, three sergeants, three corporals and sixty privates, some of which go to the Hall and others stay at the Court House, keeping sentries to the number of fifteen round it and the town to prevent any alarm from our enemies. Lieut. Tuttle and self were at the Court House taking care of the Tories there confined, which now are reduced to about twenty, which are to be sent to Albany to-morrow. In the evening had considerable conversation with them, particularly one who was with Sir William at the taking of *Niagara*, and has travelled through most of those parts. He tells me it lies rather to the southwest from this place, distance about 400 miles from hence. In travelling to which they proceed on up the Mohawk River till they get to the head, [Fort Stanwix] when they have a land carriage of about 1 mile into a creek, [Wood] down which they go till it empties into a large lake, [Oneida] which carries them to Oswego about 200 miles, and from thence to Niagara 200 more, which stands upon a point of the river, and the large Gara Lake, from thence to Detroit is called 400 miles. [Niagara Falls, first described by an European, as seen by him, Hennepin, in 1678—9. Lieut. DE PEYSTER, afterwards the famous Col. ARENT SCHUYLER DE PEYSTER, 8th King's Regiment of Foot, B. A. (?), who commanded at Michilimacinae, in 1776, built a saw mill near the subsequent site of Judge Porter's dwelling, in 1767. Marshall's "Niagara Frontier," 1865, page 20.] Not far from Niagara, up the river, is the great Falls called the Niagara Falls, which are 260 feet perpendicular. *The fort at Niagara, he says, is very strong, into which we expect Sir John is now fled, [he went to Canada] where, without any doubt, he will raise as large an army as in his power and endeavor to do us all the mischief he is capable of: as he has once forfeited his honor [a falsehood]. [There are very many of the ablest military judges who dispute the right of usurped authority to impose a valid parole; then arises another, more important question: When does such a right to impose a parole come into being; certainly not with incipient rebellion.] and fled, he must reasonably expect that his estate is confiscated [ah ha! here is the "nigger in the fence," plunder of loyal property], and that unless he be able to raise an army sufficient to overpower and drive us*

back from here, *it will be converted to the army* and others who have stepped forth in defence of their country; and if we can be able to bring over those who are on a parley to our side and confine the others, or cause them to sit neutral in the affairs, in my weak opinion his designs will prove abortive. Which may God grant!

[The will of the majority is most often the will of a bold minority which realizes Cromwell's idea of the best way to keep a population in subjection, viz.: to disarm nine-tenths and completely arm the other tenth and invest it with authority to coerce all the rest into unanimity. Such a course has often been styled "universal patriotic sentiment" in this very country.]

"On one occasion he [Cromwell] was upon the point with some of the Puritan clergy, who told him plainly that the country was against him on this project to the extent of nine in every ten persons. This bold rejoinder threw him off his guard, and he replied, 'But if I disarm the nine, and there is a sword in the hand of the tenth, that might affect the result.' He soon saw that his only real support was from the army. The security that had been obtained from their successes was already operating against their interests. It was mooted that a diminution of army pay to the extent of £1000 a month would now be a just economy. Cromwell openly blew the coal of discontent at this proposition, and renewed the spirit of hatred and contempt of the officers against the Parliament. Petitions, or rather remonstrances, were daily addressed to the House, and they were distinctly desired to surrender their power and to separate.—Gen. Hon. Sir Edward Cust's "Lives of the Warriors," Vol. II., pp. 582-3. Series of 1867.]

And in the erecting of a fort at German Flats, which we are about to do, will still contribute to our defence; and however important the having possession of Niagara may be to us [Sullivan's real objective in 1779], yet I think it matters but little for the present; and if we can stand our ground here and *bring over the Indians on our side* [always hankering after the savage support and cursing the British for winning it] time will open the door to give us possession of that likewise. Slept but little, as I was obliged to see that the sentries did their duty and were properly relieved; however nothing happened, nor any alarm.

Wednesday, June 5th, 1776.—In the morning at parade 50 men, with Capt. Potter and 3 subalterns, were paraded for a guard to go down with the Tories to Albany, that they might be dealt with as the General or Committee see fit. Accordingly, between 9 and 10 o'clock they set off with 30 or 40 of the prisoners. *There began to be great suspicion among the people that the officers had been plundering at the Hall*, which coming to the Colonel's ears, and he making strict inquiry and search, *it appeared to be true, and that to a considerable value*. And as a great part was taken last night when Capt. * * * was Captain of the guard there, which was entirely contrary to orders, *his place being at town, yet pushing himself there made it appear very evident that he and Col. * * * (as many declared that he took things) were confederates and had with Capts. * * * and * * * most of the booty, which is supposed to be near £500 [£2500]*. However, after evening roll call, the Colonel desired

us all to attend in his room; when we got there, *he informed us that many things were taken from the Hall contrary to orders; that altho' he did not deem that as the property of Sir John, yet we had by no means a right to take one farthing's worth from there until it is properly confiscated by Congress and delivered out in such a manner, or to such use as they saw fit*, [?] that he did not know who were guilty of it, neither did he want to know, as his duty would then oblige him to cashier those who were foremost in it; but as he imagined it was done *inadvertently* [innocent lumps!] he would therefore request every one to return whatever he had got that evening in the entry, for which purpose he would order the door left open and no one would know who brought them. [?] *This being a method which screened the guilty from any punishment*, shewed the desire the Colonel had of not bringing it to light, *which was exceedingly favoring*; but as he was, no doubt, fully convinced in his own mind who were the principal ones, and [?] his thus endeavoring to hide their faults, so that all would suffer equally alike, shewed, in my opinion, a small degree of partiality; and whether he, if it should have fallen upon others, would have acted in the same manner, time must discover. [?] Capt. Bloomfield came up.

Thursday, June 6th, 1776.—Went out upon parade at 8 o'clock and staid till 11, and received the following orders from the Colonel: That exercise be attended at 6 in the morning and 4 in the afternoon—that both officers and soldiers be careful to attend, unless upon duty—that no man's property be hurt upon any consideration whatever—that all gaming be set aside, and for the future the Colonel hopes to hear no more of that bad practice amongst the soldiers.

I shall insert an order given to Capt. Sharpe before we come out:

Johnstown, May 24th, 1776.—Sir: You are to march the party under your command to a place called Mayfield. * * * You will likewise secure every place that you think it possible Sir John's party can get any supplies from. You will then proceed to Secondago and apply to Mr. Godfrey Sheve, who will assist you in finding out the route Sir John has taken, [never discovered to this day] which, as soon as you have discovered, you will inform me of by express without loss of time. You will be careful to prevent a surprise by keeping a small party ahead and on the flanks in marching, and always planting proper sentries when you halt. * * * If any number of the enemy appear to be near that place, let me know of it with all expedition, that you may be as soon as possible reinforced.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

ELIAS DAYTON.

* * * * *
Attended exercise again in the afternoon. Although the Colonel desired, and reason required, that every person who had taken anything from the hall should return it last night; yet it appears that *not the quarter part was brought back*. [?] Some of our tops, whose wages will not maintain them in their gaiety, are determined to do it from others' effects, I believe. [?] Slept this evening in a tent with Ensign Norcross.

* * * * *
Monday, June 17th, 1776. [p. 127.]

REGIMENTAL ORDERS.

June 17th, 1776.

Col. Dayton positively orders that every-thing taken from Johnson Hall, either by officer or soldier, be returned this day to the Adjutant or Quarter Master. * * * Had exercise at 4 as usual. After exercise I (p. 128) was put upon guard and sent over to the Hall, where I staid taking particular care that nothing went amiss. Read some time the History of England. Slept but little. Ankle very lame. Not any time, except when I was there upon guard, but something was taken from the Hall, especially the cellar door broken open, and wine taken; and, notwithstanding the positive orders of the Colonel, very little was returned. Sad affair! ☹

* * * Saturday, June 22, 1776.—Unable to lie in bed. Very warm days. They exercised at 6. Court Martial sitting upon two Sergeants who were convicted of taking things belonging to the Hall. Sergeant Van Seaman destined to receive lashes and be reduced to the ranks. Reprieved by the Colonel of the lashes. Took a portion of rhubarb. Nicholas Dean, volunteer in Capt. Patterson's company, was put under guard for pocketing a guinea, and abusing the officers when they came in search of it; but, by application to the Colonel, he was taken out and pardoned at once. Men paraded again at 6, relieved guard, &c. Hardly able to stand. No news stirring.

 THE TRUE STORY OF ORISKANY.

Sir John Johnson beats Gen. Nicholas Herkimer.

THE DECISIVE COLLISION OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

The turning point of the Burgoyne campaign and of the American Revolution was the Battle of Oriskany, fought on the 6th of August, 1777. It was in some respects the Thermopylae of America; or rather what St. Jacob on the Birs (1444) was to Switzerland—the self-sacrifice of a sturdy yeomanry for the maintenance of what, being misled, they deemed right. To this immolation, the Thirteen Colonies owe their success, and if Independence can be traced to any one action, it is to Oriskany.

The British Campaign of 1777 was not a simple but a combined operation. To Albany, as a common *objective*, tended the advance of Burgoyne from the North, with an army something near 10,000 strong; of Howe from the South, with 17,000 to 20,000 effectives, soldiers and sailors; and St. Leger from the West, with a column of 675 regulars and provincials—whites—and 700 to 900 auxiliaries—Indians and mixed breeds. The part assigned to St. Leger was the most important. This was the opinion of the British Lieutenant-General, Sir Henry Clinton, and also of the American Major-General, Nathaniel Greene, both generally considered excellent judges of strategy. St. Leger should have had at least 2,000 good white troops, whereas the force under him, as a whole, was not only the weakest in quality as to its personal, but the most inadequately supplied with artillery and other material.

Burgoyne commenced his march on the 30th June; ascended Champlain; bridged, corduroyed, and cleared twenty-one miles between this Lake and the Hudson, and watered his horses in this river on the 28th July. About this date, St. Leger's advance appeared before Fort Stanwix—the site of the present Rome—on the "great portage" between the headwaters of the Mohawk and the headwaters of the streams which unite with the ocean through the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

About the same time the necessary repairs of Fort Stanwix were completed, its magazines filled, its garrison augmented to 950, under Col. Gansevoort and Lieutenant Colonels Marinus Willet and Mellon, and simultaneously the investment was initiated by the advance guard of the British, under Lieut. Bird, Eighth Royal (King's Regiment of Foot [Maj. aftwd Col. Arent S. de Peyster's Regiment,] B. A. From Montreal, St. Leger ascended the St. Lawrence, crossed Lake Ontario to Fort Oswego, moved up the Onondaga River eastward, traversed Oneida Lake and thence proceeded up, and "a cheval," Wood creek, its feeder. Sixty picked marksmen, under Maj. Stephen Watts (of New York City), one of Sir Johnson's Battalion of Refugees from the Mohawk, known as the "Royal Greens," preceded his march and effectively cleared the way.

On the 3d August, St. Leger arrived before Fort Stanwix and the siege began.

Amid the mistakes and blunders of this campaign, the greatest was sending "Local" Brigadier-General [Lt. Col.] St. Leger with only 675 whites (Indians counted as nothing in such an undertaking) to besiege a regular work, held by 950 comparatively good troops. Besides this, St. Leger had only a few light pieces, barely sufficient to harass and inefficient to break or destroy. Still "the Burgoyne scare" was upon the colony and nothing had been done as yet to dissipate it, to restore confidence, or to demonstrate how baseless was the panic.

[“The Albanians were seized with a panic, the people ran about as if distracted, and sent off their goods and furniture.”]

Seeing the importance of relieving Fort Stanwix, Nicholas Harkheimer [Herkheimer or Herkimer (originally Ergemon?), Major-General N. Y. S. Militia, a brave man although not much of a soldier, summoned the males of the Mohawk valley, capable of bearing arms, to meet on the German Flats at Fort Dayton, now bearing his name. He cast his lot in with the revolted colony, although his own brother was a local Colonel in the British service, and many other relations and connections as well as friends were in the opposite camp. The Militia of the Mohawk rendezvoused at Fort Dayton on the very day (3d August) that St. Leger actually began the siege of Fort Stanwix. The evening of the 5th, Harkheimer was at "The Mills" at the mouth of Oriskany Creek, some 7 to 9 miles from Fort Stanwix, and in communication with the garrison, which was to make a sortie in combination with his attack. How many men Harkheimer had is a mooted point. American histories generally estimate his force at 800. Stedman, a voracious and unprejudiced historian, says 1,000, and this number is corroborated in other careful works; Benton, in his History of Herkimer County (page 76), 900. It is certain that Harkheimer had Indians with him belonging to the "Oneida House" or tribe of the "Six Nations," but how many is

no where stated. They were of little account. One of them, however, gave the militia the best kind of advice, but as usual was not listened to. This tribe, or a large portion of it, had been detached from the British interest by agents of the Albany Committee. Their decision resulted unfortunately for them; while they accomplished little for the Americans, they brought ruin upon themselves by their defection from their ties of centuries. After the impending battle, the other Five Nations swooped down upon them and nearly destroyed them.

Harkheimer moved on the morning of the 6th August, and immediately fell into an altercation with his four Colonels and other subordinates. He wanted to display some soldierly caution and send out scouts to reconnoitre and throw out flankers to protect, and thus *feel*, as it were, his way through the woods. For this his officers, with the effrontery of ignorance and the audacity of militiamen, styled him a "Tory," or "a Traitor" and a "Coward." The bickering lasted for hours, until Harkheimer, worn out with the persistency of the blabbers, gave the order to "March on." His Oneida Indians should have been most useful at this juncture. But these traitors to a confederacy "of ages of glory," dreading to meet as foes those whom they had deserted as friends, clung close to the main body and forgot their usual cunning and woodcraft.

Meanwhile Gen. St. Leger was well aware that Harkheimer was on the way to the assistance of Col. Gansevoort in Fort Stanwix, and listened to the counsels of his second in command, "Local" Major General, (Col. B. A.) Sir John Johnson, and adopted his plan to set a trap for the approaching column. Accordingly St. Leger detached Sir John with about 80 Jagers or Hesse-Hanau Riflemen, British Regulars and some Provincials or Rangers with Butler and Brant (Thayendanege) and his Indians. Sir John established an ambush about two miles West of Oriskany. Just such an ambuscade under the partisans, de Beaugue and Langlade, absolutely annihilated Braddock in 1755; just such, again, under the same Langlade—had he been listened to by Regular Superiors—would have ruined Pitt's grand conceptions for the conquest of the Canadas by destroying the forces under Wolfe on the Montmorency, below Quebec, 31st July, 1759.

Harkheimer had to cross a deep, crooked ravine with a marshy bottom and dribble, spanned by a causeway and bridge of logs. Sir John completely enveloped this spot with marksmen, leaving an INLET for the entrance of the Americans but no OUTLET for their escape. Moreover he placed his best troops—white—on the road westward where real fighting, if any occurred, had to be done and to bar all access to the fort.

No plans were ever more judicious either for a *battle* of game or an ambuscade for troops. Harkheimer's column, without scouts, éclaireurs, or flankers, plunged into the ravine and had partially climbed the opposite crest and attained the plateau, when, with his wagon train huddled together in the bottom, the surrounding forest and dense underwood was alive with enemies and alight with the blaze of muskets and rifles, succeeded by yells and war whoops, just as the shattering lightning and the terrifying thunder are almost simultaneous.

Fortunately for the Americans, the Indians anticipated the signal to close in upon them.

The savages showed themselves a few moments too soon, so that Harkheimer's rear-guard was shut *out* of the trap instead of *in*, and thus had a chance to fly. They ran, but in many cases they were outrun by the Indians and suffered almost as severely as their comrades whom they had abandoned. Then a slaughter ensued such as never had occurred upon this continent, and if the entrapped Americans engaged had not shown the courage of desperation they would all have been lost. But Heaven interposed at the crisis and sent down a deluging shower which stopped the slaughter, since, in the day of flint locks, firing amid torrents of rain was an impossibility. This gave the Americans time to recover their breath and senses. Harkheimer very early in the action was desperately wounded in the leg by a shot which killed his horse. He caused his saddle to be placed at the foot of a beech tree, and, sitting upon it and propped against the trunk, he lit his pipe and, while quietly smoking, continued to give orders and make dispositions which saved all that escaped. His orders on this occasion were perhaps the germ of the best subsequent rifle tactics. He behaved like a hero and perished a martyr to his ideas of Liberty, dying in his own home at "Danube," two miles below Little Falls ("Little Portage"), ten days after the engagement in consequence of a bungling amputation and subsequent ignorant treatment. The monument he so richly deserved, which was voted both by Congress and his State, to the eternal disgrace of both, has never been erected, and this grand representative yeoman New Yorker has no public memorial of his qualities and services.

When the shower was about over, Sir John Johnson seeing that the Indians were yielding, sent back to camp for a reinforcement of his "Royal Greens" under his brother-in-law Maj. Stephen Watts or else St. Leger sent them to end the matter more speedily. These, although they disguised themselves like Mohawk Valley Militia, were recognized by the Americans as brothers, relatives, connections or neighbors whom Harkheimer's followers had assisted in driving into exile and poverty. These Loyalists were presumably coming back to regain what they had lost and to punish if victorious. At once to the fury of battle was added the bitterness of mutual hate, spite, and vengeance. If the previous fighting had been murderous the subsequent was horrible. Fire arms, as a rule, were thrown aside, the two forces mingled, they grasped each other by the clothes, beards, and hair, slashed and stabbed with their hunting knives, and were found in pairs locked in the embrace of hatred and death.

There is now no longer the slightest doubt that Sir John Johnson commanded the British Loyalists and Indians at Oriskany. Only one original writer ever questioned the fact, whereas all other historians agree in establishing it. The reports of St. Leger not only prove the presence of Sir John Johnson in command, but they praise his able dispositions for the ambuscade or battle. Family tradition—a sure index to the truth if not the very truth itself—and contemporary publications remove every doubt. His brother-in-law, Major Stephen Watts, of New York City, dangerously wounded, appears to have been second in command, certainly of the Whites, and most gallantly prominent in the

bloodiest, closest fighting. He, like Harkheimer, besides receiving other terrible wounds, lost his leg in this action, but unlike the latter, under equally disadvantageous circumstances, preserved his life.

["Major (Stephen) WATTS was wounded through the leg by a ball (he eventually lost his limb), and in the neck by a thrust from a bayonet which passed through, back of the windpipe and occasioned such an effusion of blood as to induce not only him but his captors to suppose (after leading him two or three miles) that he must die in consequence. He begged his captors to kill him; they refused and left him by the side of a stream under the shade of a bridge (across Oriskany Creek), where he was found two days subsequently covered with fly-blows, but still alive. He was borne by some Indians to Schenectady (Oswego and then by boat to Montreal), where he remained until sufficiently recovered to endure a voyage to England, where he was often after seen limping about Chelsea Hospital. The sash taken from him is still in possession of the Sanders family." "Legacy of Historical Gleanings." Vol I. Pages 69-70.]

["The soldier who carried the Major to the stream—and received the (Major's) watch as a reward—was named Failing, a private in Gen. Herkimer's [own, or original] regiment. He sold the watch for \$300, Continental money, to his Lieutenant, Martin G. Van Alstyn, who would never part with it, &c. M. G. Van Alstyn was 1st Lieutenant, in the 7th Company, General Herkimer's [own, or original] regiment, and was a great uncle of my [F. H. Roof of Rhinebeck, N. Y.'s] father. He lived until 1830. My father, now aged 75, remembers the watch well, and has often mentioned the incident to me, as related to him by his uncle."]

Without attempting to develop the completeness of this fratricidal butchery, it may be stated as one curious fact that Harkheimer's brother was not only, according to some narratives, a titular British Colonel, but a sort of Quartermaster to St. Leger, and especially charged with the supervision of the Indian auxiliaries who were the cause of the General's death and the slaughter of so many of their common kinsmen, connections, friends and neighbors.

All the Revolutionary battles on New York soil were, more or less, family collisions, and realized the boast which Shakespeare, in the closing lines of his Tragedy of King John puts in the mouth of the valiant bastard, Falconbridge.

"This England [New York] never did (nor never shall)

Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.

But when it first did help to wound itself

* * * * *

Come the three corners of the world in arms
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue

If England [New York] to itself do rest but true!"

This savage affair crazed even the Indians. It outstripped their own ferocity. They lost their heads—went mad like wild animals at the sight and smell of blood. They came to the conclusion that the white men had hured them into this very hell of fire and slaughter to exterminate them. The arena of battle became a madroom of bloodshed, and the Indians tomahawked and stabbed friend and foe alike, and in the wild whirl and cataclysm of passions, more powerful than their own, suffered a loss which appalled even the fell instincts of the savage.

As an American, and, especially as a Knickerbocker, the historian cannot but rejoice in this determination exhibited by the people of his State and kindred blood and of this opportunity of demonstrating it. Still, as a chronicler of events, there is no evading the concurrent testimony of facts; of Kapp's History of his People (i. e., the Dutch and German settlers of the Mohawk Valley), and of St. Leger's Reports. All of these concur in the evidence, direct and circumstantial, that Harkheimer's little army suffered a *tactical* disaster. That this did not remain a defeat and was converted (as was Monmouth) eventually into a moral triumph and political, as well as a strategical, success, was due to the common-sense commandership of Harkheimer. According to his plan, the advance and attack of his column of Mohawk Valley men was to be a combined movement, based upon, or involving, a simultaneous sortie from Fort Stanwix. *This sortie was not made in time* to save Harkheimer's life or the loss of about two-thirds of his command, killed and wounded or prisoners. Nothing preserved the survivors of Harkheimer's column but the deluging "shower of blessing." When the flood began to abate, and not until then, did Willet take advantage of the storm to make his sortie and attack that portion of St. Leger's lines which had been stripped to co-operate in the ambush set for Harkheimer. The siege works, or lines of investment—to apply a formal term to very trifling imitations—were very incomplete. To style them "lines of investment" is a misnomer. St. Leger's three batteries—the first, three light guns; the second, four diminutive mortars; the third, three more small guns—were totally inadequate for siege purposes, whereas there were fourteen pieces of artillery mounted in the fort. The redoubts to cover the British batteries, St. Leger's line of approaches and his encampment were all on the north side of the fort. These were occupied by 450 to 500 regulars and Provincials. Sir John Johnson's works, held by from 130 to 175 Loyalist troops, were to the southward. It was against these last, *entirely denuded of their defenders*, that Willet made his sortie. St. Leger's works, and those of Sir John Johnson, were widely separated and independent of each other, and the intervals, to make the circuit of the investment *apparently* complete, were held, or rather patrolled, by the Indians, who, however, during the sortie, were all away ambuscading and assailing Harkheimer. Consequently, Willet's sortie, however successful in its results as to material captured, and as a diversion, was utterly devoid of peril. That he had time to plunder Sir John Johnson's camp, and three times send out seven wagons, load them, and send them back into the post, without the loss of a man, is unanswerable proof that he met with no opposition. He surprised and captured a small squad of prisoners (2)—five, an officer (commissioned or non-commissioned) and four privates—and saw a few dead Indians and whites but nowhere does it appear whether they had been killed by the fire from the fort or in the attack. All the merit that belongs to his sortie, in a military point of view, is the fact, that to save whatever material Willet did not have time to remove, Sir John Johnson had to extricate and hurry back his "Royal Greens" from the battle ground of Oriskany four to five and a half miles away; leaving the stage of collision with the expectation that the com-

pletion of the bloody work would be effectually performed by the Indians. These, however, had, already, got their fill of fighting, and to this alone was due the result so fortunate for the survivors of Harkheimer's column, that its remnant was left in possession of the field, soaked with their blood and covered with their dead and wounded. The glory of Oriskany belongs to the men of the Mohawk Valley, only in that although they were "completely entrapped," they defended themselves with such desperation for five or six hours, and finally displayed so much restored courage that they were able to extricate even a few fragments from the slaughter pit. That Willet captured "five British standards" or five British stand of colors is not probable; scarcely possible. They may have been camp colors or markers. The regimental colors are not entrusted to dribble detachments from regiments. The "Royal Greens" may have had a color, a single flag, although this is very doubtful, because, at most, they constituted a weak battalion. The colors of the Eighth or King's Regiment of Foot were certainly left at headquarters, likewise those of the British Thirty-fourth.* The same remark applies to the Hesse-Hanau Chasseurs—a company of Jagers or Riflemen would certainly have no flags.

As still further proof of this view taken, the camp of the British Regulars, proper, was not attacked. The fact is, the American story of Willet's sortie has an atmosphere of myth about it. St. Leger's report to Burgoyne, and likewise to his immediate superior, Carleton—the latter the most circumstantial—present the most convincing evidence of truthfulness. St. Leger writes to Carleton:

"At this time [when Harkheimer drew near] I had not 250 of the King's troops in camp, the various and the extensive operations I was under an absolute necessity of entering into having employed the rest; and therefore [I] could not send [originally] above 80 white men, rangers and troops included, with the whole corps of Indians. Sir John Johnson put himself at the head of this party. * * *

In relation to the victory [over Harkheimer], it was equally complete as if the whole [of the Americans] had fallen; nay, more so, as the 200 [out of 800 or 900 or 1,000] who escaped served only to spread the panic wider, but it was not so with the Indians, their loss was great, I must be understood *Indian computation*, being only about 30 killed and

wounded, and in that number some of their favorite chiefs and confidential warriors were slain. * * * As I suspected, the enemy [Willet] made a sally with 350 men towards Lieut. Bird's post to facilitate the entrance of the relieving corps or bring on a general engagement with every advantage they could wish. * * *

Immediately upon the departure of Captain Hoxes I learned that Lieut. Bird, misled by the information of a cowardly Indian that Sir John was prest, had quitted his post to march to his assistance. I commanded the detachment of the King's regiment in support of Captain Hoxes by a road in sight of the garrison, which, with executive fire from his party, immediately drove the enemy into the fort without any further advantage than frightening some squares and pilfering the packs of the warriors which they left behind them."

It was Harkheimer who knocked all the fight out of the Indians, and it was the desertion of the Indians, and this alone, that rendered St. Leger's expedition abortive.

In summing up it should be borne in mind that St. Leger had only 675 Regulars and Provincials in addition to his ten light guns and diminutive mortars to besiege a fort, well supplied, mounting fourteen guns, garrisoned with 750 at least and according to most authorities 950 troops of the New York Line, i. e., to a certain degree, Regulars.

Nevertheless, St. Leger continued to press the siege, with at most 650 whites against 750 to 950 whites, from the 6th until the 22d August, and, when he broke up and retreated at the news of Arnold's approach with a force magnified by rumor, it was almost altogether on account of the *infamous conduct* of the Indians. All the evidence when sifted justifies his remarks that the Indians "became more formidable than the enemy we had to expect." By enemy, he meant Arnold's column hastening his march against him and the garrison in his immediate front, and yet neither St. Leger nor Burgoyne underestimated the American troops—not even the Militia, especially when fighting under cover or behind works.

The gist of all this lies in one fact—it was not the defense of Fort Stanwix, but the self-devotion and desperation of Harkheimer's militia that saved the Mohawk Valley and constitutes Oriskany the Thermopylae of the American Revolution; the crisis and turning point against the British;† of the Burgoyne Campaign; and the "*Decisive Conflict*" of America's *Seven Years War for Independence*.

*In corroboration of this view of the subject, take the concluding paragraph of Washington's letter of July 20, 1779, to the President of Congress, reporting the capture of Stony Point, on the night of the 15-16th July, 1779. In this paragraph he states that "two standards" were taken, "one belonging to the garrison [this was not a standard proper, but what is technically called a garrison flag] and one [a standard proper] to the Seventeenth Regiment." Stony Point was held by a British force only a few less than the white besieging force before Fort Stanwix. The garrison was composed of detachments from four different regular organizations, and yet these had only one standard, proper, which belonged to the Seventeenth. Of this regiment there were six companies, the majority in the works, whereas the Lieut.-Colonel commanding had his permanent quarters.

†As everything in regard to these occurrences is interesting, the following translation of von Eschling's "*Deutschen Hülfsstruppen*" (I, 3, 23) is presented in regard to the Hesse-Hanau Jager or Rifle company attached to St. Leger's command:

"Finally it is proper to commemorate in detail an event in connection with this campaign which we have alluded to or treated already more at length; the flanking expedition undertaken, as a side-issue, against Fort Stanwix. The Jager or rifle company which was assigned to him was the first that the Count of Hesse-Hanau sent over to America. It left Hanau 7th May, 1777, and reached Canada 11th of June. It was at once sent forward by the Governor [Carleton] to join the troops which had already started up the St. Lawrence and assigned to Lieut. Hildebrand. The march through these distant and sparsely settled districts was long and very laborious, accompanied with all kinds of dangers and obstacles. In order to avoid the almost impenetrable wilderness, a greater circuit was made across Lake Ontario. The Corps of St. Leger, comprising detachments from so many different organizations, started in the beginning of July from the neighbourhood of Montreal as soon as the expected Indian force had been assembled there. The transportation in flat boats 150 miles up the river was very slow; the more so because, every now and then, the

ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN

Sir John Johnson and Robt. van Rensselaer,

NEAR FOX'S MILLS OR AT KLOCK'S FIELD,

19th October, 1780.

PROCEEDINGS OF A COURT OF INQUIRY

UPON THE CONDUCT OF

General Robert van Rensselaer.

["The Northern Invasion of October, 1780, * * against the frontier of New York" * * by Franklin B. Hough, (Bradford Club Series, No. 6.) N. Y., 1866. Pages 166-208, Consult Map "Routes of the Northern Invasions of 1780," opp: 65.]

At a Court of Enquiry held at the city of Albany, on the 12th day of March, 1781, to enquire into the conduct of Brigadier-General Robert Van Rensselaer, on the incursions of the enemy into Tryon County, in October last, pursuant to general orders of his Excellency Governor Clinton:

Present: Brig'r General Swartwout, [appointed 3d March, 1780, Duchess Co. Militia] President.

Colonels, Thomas Thomas [appointed 28th May, 1778, Westchester Co. Militia], John Cantine [promoted 21st February, 1778, Ulster Co. Militia]—Members.

The court met, and adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at 5 o'clock.

Tuesday, March 13th, 1781. The court met pursuant to adjournment.

Colo: [Tryon Co. Militia] John Harper then

boats had to be taken ashore and carried by hand around the rapids or cataracts. Having overcome the difficulties of the river the route lay across the broad Ontario Lake to Fort Oswego on the south shore. There a day was devoted to rest in order that the troops might recover to some extent from the exhaustion produced by their previous exertions. Thence the route followed a stream [Oswego river] and a small lake [Oneida] inland in a southerly direction; [thence a *cheval*, and up, Wood Creek] the troops marched to the Mohawk on which stood Fort Stanwix held by the enemy [Americans]. The march was extremely laborious, since not only natural difficulties had to be overcome, but also the artificial obstacles which the Americans had placed in the way to hinder the advance of their opponents.

On the 3d August, the Fort—after the garrison had rejected the demand for a surrender—was assaulted without success. On the 5th, a relieving column of nearly 1,000 men drew near, St. Leger was aware of its approach in time, and for its reception [Sir John Johnson] placed an ambuscade in the woods. This, for the greater part consisted of regular troops and among these were the Hesse-Hanau Jagers. The rest were Indians.

[This account differs from every one hitherto examined, and shows even yet we are not acquainted with some of the most interesting facts of this momentous conflict. St. Leger in his official report expressly states that he did not send over 80 white men, Rangers and troops included, with the whole corps of Indians, and that Sir John Johnson was in command. The discrepancy, however, is easily reconcilable with what has been hitherto stated and explains the late arrival of the "Johnson" or "Royal Greens." These latter must have remained in camp to hold the garrison in check. When the Indians began to slink out of the fight, the Royal Greens must have been hurried to the scene of action, leaving their line to the south of the Fort entirely destitute of defenders. This established what the writer has always claimed, that Willet encountered no opposi-

appeared before them and offered in evidence against Gen. Rensselaer a copy of a letter written by John Lansing, Jr., Esq., by order of the General, to Colo. Lewis Dubois, in these words, vizt:

(Village of Fultonville), Van Eps, Caghna-wago, 19th Octo., 1780.

Sir: We are here, with a force sufficient to cope with the enemy, but if you can possibly co-operate with us it will in all probability tend to insure us success. Gen. Rensselaer, who commands here, therefore advises you to march down along the south side of the [Mohawk] river, with all the men you have, with as much expedition as possible. He intends to attack the enemy as soon as the day appears. It depends on your exertions to favor this enterprise. I am, Sir, yours,

By order of Gen. Rensselaer,

Colo. Dubois.

J. LANSING, Jr.

Colo. John Harper being then sworn, says, That on the 19th of October, he was under the command of General Rensselaer, on the Mohawk river: That he commanded a party of Indians on the south side of the Mohawk river, east of Fort Plane, or Rensselaer [half a mile W of present village of Fort Plain]: That he was under the immediate command of Colo. Dubois: That in the morning of the 19th October they proceeded down the river until they heard an engagement which happened on the north side of the river, between a detachment of troops under the command of Colo. John Brown, and the enemy under SIR JOHN JOHNSON: That upon hearing the firing, Colo. Dubois ordered the greater part of the New York Levies, under his immediate command, and the

tion at all in his sortie and that the ordinary account of it is no better than a myth. Furthermore, everything demonstrates irrefutably the total unreliability of the Indians as fighters; and that the failure of St. Leger's expedition is entirely attributable to the misconduct of these savages. Finally, since the Burgoyne expedition depended on St. Leger's success, and his utter military bankruptcy is chargeable to the Indians; and to them alone, therefore—as it is clearly shown—the whole British Combined Operations of 1777 ended in a catastrophe, through a fatal overestimate of the value of Indians as a fighting power; or as auxiliaries wherever any hard fighting had to be done, or for any useful purpose whatever involving perseverance.]

"The surprise was such a perfect success scarcely one-half the militia escaped. While St. Leger had thus scattered his troops, the besieged made a sortie and plundered his camp. This was a grievous loss to him; because in these almost desert districts pretty much all the necessities of life had to be carried [along with a column]; since the British troops were wanting in artillery and since a second relieving column, 2,000 strong, was approaching under the audacious Gen. Arnold, which threw the Indians into such certain terror that they either scattered or besought that they might be let back again. In consequence of [all] this, St. Leger had to break up the siege on the 23 August, and abandoning tents, guns and stores, retreat at once.

"So ended this operation which, if it had turned out more successfully, would, in any event, have prevented the tragic fate of Burgoyne's army."

If the disinterested German soldier and historian, von Eckling, does not demonstrate that the success of Burgoyne depended on that of St. Leger, and that this was completely frustrated by Oriskany, thus making Oriskany the turning point of the American Revolution—words are inadequate to express the truth.

Indians commanded by the witness, to cross to the north side of the river to support Colo. Brown's detachment, when some men of that detachment which had been defeated and dispersed, came to the river, and crossed it, and gave the deponent information of the state of Colo. Brown's party. That upon hearing that Colo. Brown was defeated, the deponent informed Colo. Dubois of the disaster, and that the whole of the detachment of levies and Indians or part of them, who had crossed to support Colo. Brown, recrossed to the south side. That Colo. Dubois then informed the deponent that General Rensselaer was below, and requested him to ride down to the Gen'l. and advised him of the fate of Brown's detachment, which he accordingly did. That he found General Rensselaer halted about a mile below Fort Rensselaer [or Fort Plain]. That he entreated the General to march on: That he informed him there was a *ford near at hand, about knee deep*, where the troops might cross: That he urged the general to attack the enemy at all events: That the general informed him he did not know the enemy's numbers, nor the route they intended to take: That he told the general that if the enemy took the same route which they did when they came, they could do us no more injury than they had already done, or, if he should go thro' Johnstown, they would hurt their friends and not ours. That the general then told him, that he would go to Colo. Dubois and advise with him; and that he attended the General there: That he is ignorant of what passed between Colo. Dubois and the general, but that the levies and Indians with some of the Tryon county militia, recrossed to the north side of the river, either by the General's, or Colo. Dubois' orders:—the deponent supposed it to have been by the General's orders.

That while the detachment under Col. Dubois, and the Indians and Militia were crossing, the Gen'l. and Colo. Dubois went to Fort Rensselaer and there dined. That they returned to the bank of the river, and there stood at the ferry (John Walrod's Ferry opposite Fort Plain) for a considerable time after the Levies and Indians had crossed: That the deponent came to the north bank of the river and hailed the Gen'l. entreating him for God's sake to cross, but he received no reply. That the deponent believes the levies and Indians had all crossed about 1 o'clock, and that he believes it was near three hours thereafter, before the immediate command of General Rensselaer, (who had crossed about a mile below,) came up to the ferry, where the levies and Indians remained paraded. That when the militia came up, the whole of the troops were divided into three columns and marched to attack the enemy *Col. Dubois with the levies on the right, the Albany militia on the left*, and that he does not know who commanded the *central column composed of whites and Indians*. That the deponent commanded the Indians in advance of the centre column. That after advancing some distance, he was met by an Indian who informed him that the enemy were near at hand; and that the enemy's force was about 400 white men and but few Indians (1); which the deponent in person immediately communicated to Gen'l. Rensselaer, then at the head of the centre column, and then returned to his command, without receiving any further orders from the general. That after advancing about half a mile, his party fell in with,

and began to skirmish with the enemy's rear-guard, who were then *retreating up the river*. That part of the centre column also fell in with that part of the enemy. That *the enemy then changed their front, came down the river and engaged [attacked] our left, and commenced a regular, and heavy platoon firing on them*: But that our left, *not being pressed, fired irregularly, and were beat back, but advanced again and continued firing irregularly*. That at this juncture the enemy attempted to gain and secure the ford. That thereupon part of the centre column filed off to the right and joined Colo. Dubois' detachment who *attempted to gain the enemy's left flank*, and the remainder continued, with five of the Indians, advancing in the centre. That soon after a *heavy fire commenced, and was continued on the right*, which the deponent has since been informed, happened between Colo. Whiting [comm'd. 16th June, 1778] and the enemy. That *when the firing on the right commenced, it was quite dusk*, and the detachment under Colo. Dubois had gained the enemy's left, and they were fording the river. That he was then informed by Colo. Dubois, that the general had ordered a retreat, and was requested by the Colonel to communicate it to Major Benschoten [of N. Y. Regt: raised for defence of frontiers, 1st July, 1780]. That he did not receive orders to retire, till the enemy had crossed to the south side of the river. That when he went in search of Major Benschoten, he found some of the troops composed of Tryon militia and levies, *plundering*. That he forbid it, and ordered the Indians to remain in close quarters, *lest some accident might happen to them*.

Question by the Gen'l. How was you informed that the enemy had crossed?

Answer. When I was in quest of Major Benschoten, I was informed by many people, who were on the ground, that the enemy had crossed.

Quest. Did you see me after that?

Ans. No, sir.

Quest. Did you send me any information that the enemy had crossed the river?

Ans. I did not.

Quest. Did our troops engage the enemy as they were first formed and advanced?

Ans. No.

Quest. Do you not recollect that you came to me before the skirmishing began, and requested that the Indians might go in the rear of the centre column?

Ans. I do not.

Quest. Did you observe the militia on the left to be in great confusion when the firing commenced?

Ans. I did.

Mr. William Harper being then sworn, says, That he was at Schenectady on the evening of the 11th of October, when Gen'l. Rensselaer arrived there with the militia, and they discovered the lights of fires at the lower end of Schoharie, where they had received information that the enemy were burning. That he was informed the militia under the general were to march the next morning. That the militia remained in Schenectady till it was late in the morning. That the deponent, being impatient, went on to the Williger, about fourteen miles above Schenectady, where he received information that the enemy were burning at the Cadorotry (a mile or two up Schoharie Creek, on the east side), about a mile above Fort Hunter. That the express who came from Fort Hunter to Gen'l. Rensselaer

was forwarded by the dept. That the Genl and troops soon came on. That it was near sunset when they rec'd information of the enemy's being at Warrenbush. [Warrenbush was the name applied to a tract of some 15,000 acres of land, mostly in the present town of Florida, Montgomery County, owned by Sir Peter Warren, an uncle of Sir William Johnson.] That the troops were ordered to halt at Elliott's at the Old Farm. That the Genl applied to the deponent, to procure a reconnoitering party to discover the number, situation and movements of the enemy. That he procured them and waited on the Genl. That the Genl told him he would consult with his field officers, and that thereupon he sent a Sergeant, Wm. Wood, with seven or eight men to reconnoitre the enemy. That the deponent accompanied the party to Fort Hunter, and from thence, he with one man went to *Anthony's Nose*, where the enemy had their camp. That they returned with all possible dispatch to the General, whom they found advanced with the troops as far as Gardinier's Flats [a short distance below Fultonville], about four and a half miles above Fort Hunter, and 26 above Schenectady, about twelve o'clock at night or after. That he informed the general of the enemy's situation, and that the Genl continued advancing with the troops to Van Eps, about half or three-fourths of a mile. That the Genl then ordered letters to be written to the officers commanding at Fort Plane or Rensselaer, and Stone Arabia and they were given in charge to Lt Wm Wallace. That the Genl and troops remained at Van Eps between two and three hours, and that soon after the march the day broke. That the troops, marched about four miles, to Peter Lewis' [at Stone Ridge near the W line of the town of Glen] where the whole halted about ten or twelve minutes for the purpose of examining a prisoner taken by our advance party. That the troops were marched two or three miles to Putnam's Land, *where the whole body halted a considerable time, and the advance party were on or near the ground where the enemy had halted that night.* That the deponent went to the Genl and urged to him that the troops might be ordered to march, but the Genl answered that *he must first furnish the troops with cartridges.* That soon after leave was obtained for Major McKinster with the advance party to march.

That while the troops were halted there, Col. Louis had been sent out to reconnoitre whether the enemy did not remain at the Nose, [Anthony's] to ambuscade Genl Rensselaer's troops.

[This makes out a curious victory as claimed for the Americans at Klock's Field, since the victors (*sic*) were afraid of the vanquished.]

(Col. Louis Cook was an Indian from Cahnawaga village, near Montreal, who had joined the American army, and had received a commission as Lieutenant-colonel. His Indian name was Atiatonharonkwen. He afterwards lived at St. Regis. He died near Buffalo, towards the close of the war of 1812-15.—Hough's History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, p. 182.)

That the advanced party under [the veteran] Major McKinster, marched on to lame Corn's Van Alstyne's, and that he and the major discovered the enemy drawn up on the opposite side of the river at John Saxe's house. That the road at the [Anthony's] Nose was

very bad, so as to render it difficult to come up with artillery. That Major McKinster's party halted about an hour at Van Alstyne's before the main body came up. That as soon as the main body arrived, the whole marched about a mile, to another Corns Van Alstyne's; and on their arrival there they heard a firing between Colo Brown's detachment and the enemy. That the Genl. enquired from the deponent the best place to ford the river. That upon trial at Major Yale's it was found impracticable. That they then marched on to Adam Countryman's abt one and a half miles, where the whole of the troops halted and another party was ordered to advance. That the troops had been there about half an hour when Colo [John] Harper came to the Genl and gave him an acct of Colo Brown's disaster. That it was full three hours from that time, before the troops under Genl Rensselaer crossed and came up to Walrod's Ferry. That Genl Rensselaer went up to Walrod's Ferry on the south side of the river, but *when* deponent knows not. That the General stood at the ferry, and was pressed and intreated by him, Colo Harper and others to cross the river, and attack the enemy, but that he gave no answer, nor came over, till his militia had joined Colo Dubois' command. That after the troops had joined, they were crowded into three columns, the right commanded by Colo Dubois. That about sunset or after, the enemy came down out of the woods to Philan's orchard, when a skirmishing began between our left and the enemy in the lowlands. *That our left was much disordered, and fired very irregularly and never were in order after firing commenced.* That the rear of our left was about five hundred yards from the enemy when the front began their firing at about two hundred and fifty [yards] and the whole kept up a brisk fire towards the enemy. That he saw several officers (and particularly Adj't Van Veghten of Colo Cuyler's reg't), *exert themselves to bring on the troops, and to prevent their running away, but that they were not able to bring up the men so close to action as to annoy the enemy.* That the confusion took place as soon as the firing commenced, and that it was pretty dark before it ceased. That about the time when the firing on our part ceased, the Dept saw the Genl with the left column. That the Genl informed him, that as it was dark, and dangerous to let the firing continue, least our troops should kill each other, he had ordered or *would order the troops out of action.* That he pressed the Genl to push the enemy while they were crossing the river, but the Genl declined it. That it was then dark. That the General observed to the Deponent, that *he was apprehensive that the enemy would surround our troops, and desired the deponent to ride down to the river and inform himself whether the enemy were not attempting it.* That he replied to the Genl, they were crossing the river, but in compliance with the General's request he rode down. That the place where the enemy crossed the river is a common ford and generally made use of. That *when* the Genl told him, he was resolved to call the men off, he requested the Genl to encamp there on the low ground, the field of action. But that the General replied he would go to the hills, and *he with the troops retired to a hill about a mile from the field of action.*

Henry Glen Esqr being sworn, says: That on the 17th Octr about 5 o'clock P. M. General Rensselaer arrived at Schenectady at the deponent's house, and informed him that a number of troops were on their march from Albany. That the Genl appeared solicitous to procure horses to mount his troops on, and expedite their march to Fort Hunter, to waylay the enemy who were on their way from Schoharie to the Mohawk river. That the deponent as Acting Quartermaster of the Department advised the Genl that the most eligible mode of procuring horses would be by having the inhabitants of Schenectady convened, which was accordingly done in the evening. That the Genl then represented to the inhabitants [of Schenectady] that he wanted four or five hundred horses to mount his men on, to go to Fort Hunter, for the purpose above mentioned. That the Genl informed the inhabitants, that the deponent had received an express from Colo Veeder commanding the Lower Fort at Schoharie, informing him that the enemy had burnt and destroyed the settlements at Schoharie, on that day, and were halted that night at one Sidney's, [in the present town of Esperance] about fourteen or sixteen miles from Fort Hunter. That the distance from Schenectady to Fort Hunter is twenty miles. That the few inhabitants who were collected, promised the general their horses, and that they should be sent to the deponent's house by break of day, next morning. That it was also proposed by Genl Rensselaer, that in case a sufficiency of horses could not be procured, he would take waggons to carry the greater number of the men on.

Quest. by Genl Rensselaer. Were the horses or waggons ready as I had required?

Ans. They were not.

Quest. Do you recollect, that as soon as I arrived at Schenectady, I went to the Commissary, and desired him to procure; or get in readiness that evening provisions for the troops who were coming on?

Ans. I do. But the commissary had no provisions. He sent out and procured two beeves, which were killed the next morning, but it was late before the troops were served. The last drew their rations about eight o'clock.

Quest. Do you recollect my sending that night to Colo Van Alstyne, who was at Nestigona, to expedite his march so as to be in town by daylight next morning?

[Nestigone is the name of a land patent, in Saratoga county, granted to John Rosie and others, April 22, 1708. It lay in the rear of a row of farms fronting the river, and was a mile in depth, in the present county of Saratoga. The name is sometimes found written Comestigone or Niskayuna, the latter now limited to a township south of the Mohawk in Schenectady county.]

Ans: I do.

Quest: After the troops were served with provisions, did I, to your knowledge, make any unnecessary delay in marching thus?

Ans: You did not.

Quest: What distance is it, between Nestigona and Sir William Johnson's old place?

Ans: The distance between its nearest settlement called Rosendal and Sir Wm's old place is about nineteen miles.

Quest: Had the troops any time to cook their provisions, from the time they drew it till their march?

Ans: They had not.

Court. Quest: Had you any intelligence

from Gen. Rensselaer on the day of his march, after he left Schenectady?

Ans: Yes. The same evening an express came from the Genl with a letter to the governor dated at Chuektinunda, six miles east of Fort Hunter, informing the Govr. that he had halted to refresh his men, till moon-rise, when he intended to march. Afterwards an express from the officer commanding at Fort Hunter came to me with an acct that Sir John Johnson had that afternoon passed Fort Hunter and had destroyed Cadrothy on his route.

[The *Chuctanunda creek* unites with the Mohawk opposite the present village of Amsterdam. The road south of the river, in former times, instead of following the bend of the river, here passed up over the hill, and thence in a direct line to Fort Hunter. This road was about five miles long, and passed nearly two miles from the river.]

Quest. Are you acquainted with the roads and passes of Cheektinunda Hill?

Ans. I am. The road is bad, and up a long clay hill with a pretty close wood on both sides.

Colo. Lewis Dubois, being duly sworn, says, that on th 19th October last, at about two o'clock P. M., he met General Rensselaer about three fourths of a mile below Fort Rensselaer, and informed him that Colo. Brown was defeated, and that the enemy were advancing up the river. That the general then advised with him where would be the most convenient spot to meet them: that he told the general there was a fording place just by the ground where the troops then were, and that in case they crossed there, it would expedite the pursuit after the enemy more than if they crossed in the two small boats above, which would delay them a long time. That the general then gave orders to Lt. Driskill to send the artillery to Fort Rensselaer, and that the troops should cross immediately. That the deponent then asked the general whether he had dined. The general replied that he had not. That as soon as the general had put the troops in motion, he rode to the deponent's quarters in Fort Rensselaer to take dinner, after leaving orders with the officers to cross the river with all possible dispatch. That Lt. Driskill was then ordered to leave his men in Fort Rensselaer, to work the artillery in case the enemy should attack it, and some of the militia who were in the fort, were ordered to cross the river, and Mr Lansing was sent down by the general to expedite the crossing of the militia. That the Genl and the deponent then went down to Wohrod's ferry and found that the militia had not yet come up. That he sent several expresses to hurry them on. That upon their coming to the ferry, they found several of the militia who had not yet crossed, but immediately passed the ferry, and then the Genl. and the deponent crossed as quick as possible. That about the time of their crossing, they discovered from the firing, that the enemy were coming down out of the woods towards the river, at or near Fox's MILLS. That shortly thereafter Genl. Rensselaer's militia joined, and the general advised with him on the most eligible mode of attacking the enemy. That the plan of attack was directed to be in three columns. The right composed of Levies commanded by the deponent, to be on the high ground; the left composed of militia, and commanded by Colo. Cuyler, to be on the low ground, and the

centre to be commanded by Colo. Whiting. That it was found inconvenient to march in columns and they were ordered to subdivide into sections, and so marched on till they came in sight of the enemy. That the deponent rode down to the Genl. (then in the centre column) and informed him ~~that~~ *that the enemy* [under Sir John Johnson] were formed as follows: That their Rangers were on their right, on the bank of the river, the Regular Troops in the centre on the flats in column, and the Indians and Riflemen on the left, about 150 yards advanced of the other troops, in an orchard near KLOCK'S HOUSE. That upon reconnoitering the ground, it was found impracticable to form the centre and left columns as was first intended. That they were therefore subdivided into smaller detachments. That thereupon a skirmishing commenced between some scattering Indians and white men, advanced of the right of the centre column of the enemy. That the deponent then retired to his command. That Major McKinstry in pursuance of the General's orders filed off to the right from the centre and marched very near the right column. That the remainder of the centre column under the command of Colo Whiting, advanced to the orchard at *Klock's house* and engaged them. *That the firing on the part of the enemy was so warm, as to prevent troops under Colo Whiting from advancing.* That thereupon the deponent ordered two companies of his [right] column to raise the summit of the hill and fire on the enemy [Riflemen and Indians] in flank, which broke them and they ran off. That deponent then marched on till he gained the flank of the enemy's main body, pursuant to the General's orders. That it began to grow dusk and he discovered that his front had got into the enemy's rear. That thereupon, he faced his men about, and marched in a line down to the enemy undiscovered: That he gave orders for firing platoons from right to left, when the enemy broke and ran: That he advanced and continued firing upon the enemy *till he discovered a firing on the rear of his left.* *That finding it came from some part of our own militia,* he halted his men, and rode up to the militia, and met with General Rensselaer on the left of the centre column, where he found the militia had given way. That it was so dark that he could not discover Genl Rensselaer at the distance of five paces, nor know him but from his voice, and that when he came up to the Genl he found his efforts in vain. That he informed the Genl that *the right of the centre line were firing on the Levies,* who were advanced against the enemy. That it was then proposed by either the Genl or the deponent, that the firing should be ordered to cease *least our men should kill each other.* That the Genl requested him to ride to the rear of the troops and *stop their retreating,* and inform them that the enemy had retired over the river. That he went some distance, and on his return informed the Genl that *he could not overtake the fronts.* That the Genl inquired from him, whether he knew of a good piece of ground to encamp on that night. That he thereupon recommended a hill near *Klock's house,* and an order was sent to Major Benschoten of the Levies to return to the ground near Klock's house. That on riding with the Genl he mentioned his apprehensions, that his men would want provisions for the march the next day. That the deponent then recommended to the Genl a spot of

ground near *Fox's* where the troops *would be secure from surprise* and provisions might be brought to them from the baggage waggons which were at Fort Rensselaer. That part of the levies were left at Klock's house, to take charge of the wounded, and of the stores taken from the enemy, and the remainder of the troops retired to Fox's. That the Genl immediately ordered parties to Fort Rensselaer for provisions for the militia, and ordered the deponent to hold himself and the Levies in readiness to march before daylight the next morning in pursuit of the enemy. That in consequence thereof, he marched with the troops about 3 o'clock in the morning.

Question by the Court. Did the Genl, in your opinion, do everything in his power, to annoy and repel the enemy, and save the country from desolation?

Ans. Yes, sir, while I was with him, I was nothing wanting in him.

Quest. by Court. Did the Genl at any time discover the least want of personal bravery and firmness in the course of the action, and transactions of the 19th October last?

Ans. He did not, but the contrary.

Quest. by Court. Did you know that the place where the enemy crossed the river was a common fording place?

Ans. I did not, nor was it. The bank at the place where they crossed was breast high from the water, and the water was deep.

Quest. Was it very dark on the evening of the action?

Ans. I do not think it was fifteen minutes after the firing commenced, before it was so dark as to render it impossible to distinguish one person from another at a distance of ten paces.

The Court adjourned till to-morrow at 7 o'clock.

The court met pursuant to adjournment.

Mr. Sampson Dyckman being sworn, says. That he joined General Rensselaer about five miles above Schenectady, at three or four o'clock on the afternoon of the day the Genl marched from Schenectady. That when he came up with the Genl the troops were marching with expedition, and continued so till evening, being then about fourteen or sixteen miles from Schenectady, where they halted till moon-rise. That just as the moon rose, the Genl came to the encampment and ordered the troops to prepare and march immediately, and that in five minutes they moved. That the Genl informed him the enemy were some distance ahead and that he expected his troops would soon fall in with them. That the road over Chucktinunda Hill was very bad, miry and deep, which impeded the march. That they arrived at Fort Hunter at about 12 o'clock and crossed instantly in a scow, on waggons and on horseback, and proceeded in their march without delay. That when the roads were good, the troops marched very fast, but where the roads were bad, they were delayed by the artillery and waggons.

Question by General Rensselaer. Did you not come to me with a request that the troops might not be ordered to march so fast?

Ans. I did wait on you, at the instance of Major Schuyler and others, who said the men would not be fit for action, in case they were marched so fast. You then told me, that *the enemy were ahead destroying the country,* and the men must be marched fast at all events, to come up with them. Many of the men were much fatigued by ten o'clock next

morning so as to render it necessary for them to go on horseback and in the waggons.

The Court adjourned till 5 o'clock P. M.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment.

Major Lewis R. Morris, being sworn, says. That he overtook Genl Rensselaer at Mr. H. Glen's at Schenectady, on the 18th October last, at about 12 o'clock and joined him as a volunteer aid-de-camp. That he was there ordered by the Genl to assist Mr. Le Roy, his Major of Brigade in getting the troops out of town. That the troops marched out of town about one and a half miles on the low lands where they were formed and ordered to march into sections to the *Woestyne* at Mr. Van Eps, about nine miles from Schenectady, where they halted to refresh themselves for a very short time, and then marched to Sir Williams old place, [three miles W of the present village of Amsterdam]. That it was then dark, and the troops halted till moon-rise about ten or eleven o'clock. The deponent was then informed that the Genl and Field Officers on consultation, *thought it imprudent and dangerous to march over the Chickaunda Hill* in the night till moon-rise, and the troops were accordingly halted on the side of the road. That the deponent thereafter attended the advanced corp under Lt. Col. Pratt and Major McKinstor. That about moon-rise, the Genl ordered the troops in motion, and marched to Fort Hunter, and that the troops immediately crossed the river, or Schoharie creek in scows, and while the Genl was examining two deserters from the enemy. That the troops were halted on the west side of Schoharie creek till the artillery came up, which had gone a different route and joined them in a short time. That the troops then marched on without delay to Van Eps, where they arrived about four o'clock and halted not more than an hour. That during that halt letters were written by order of the Genl to Colo Dubois and Colo Brown, informing them of his approach with a body of troops, and that these letters were given in a charge to a Mr. Wallace. That soon after the letters were dispatched, the troops were put in motion; that the day then began to dawn. That the roads were very bad and the troops complained of being very much fatigued. That the whole body marched about four or five miles and halted at the ruins of a house, for a few minutes for the purpose of examining a prisoner taken that night. That the deponent then again joined the advance corps and proceeded on to a bridge, where he and Lt. Col. Pratt discovered a party of the enemy on the opposite side of the river. That the advance corps halted till the deponent rode down about a quarter of a mile to the Genl, (who was advancing with the troops), to inform him of the discovery of the enemy. That as that party of the enemy was out of the reach of musket shot, the Genl ordered up a piece of artillery, whereupon the enemy dispersed. That the whole of the troops moved on to the south side of the river opposite Major Fry's [now opposite Canajoharie village] where (as the deponent had understood) the Genl intended to cross the troops, but that on his arrival there, he found it impossible. That it was then between eight and ten o'clock. That a firing was then heard, which, from its direction, was supposed to be at Oswegatchie, [a settlement a short distance north east from Stone Arabia, in Palatine] and which afterwards proved to have been Colo Brown's encounter with the enemy. That the advanced

corps not being incumbered with any waggons or artillery moved on expeditiously. That ~~with~~ the main body were one ammunition wagon and two pieces of artillery, (2) and that to the best of his knowledge, the baggage waggons were in the rear of the whole. That the main body moved on to a house about a mile below Fort Rensselaer. That it was then between 10 and 1 o'clock. That the troops halted there, and the Genl then recd information of *Colo Brown's defeat*. That Colo Dubois and Colo Harper there waited on the Genl. That the troops were ordered to refresh themselves; and the Genl gave orders for their crossing the ford as soon as they had refreshed themselves. That after delivering the orders for that purpose, the Genl went with Colo Dubois to Fort Rensselaer. That the deponent recd orders from the Genl to go and assist Mr. Le Roy in getting the troops over the ford. That he accordingly exerted himself in assisting Mr. Le Roy to get the troops over the river. That ~~the~~ the troops refused to ford the river, and waggons were drove into it, to facilitate their passage. That it was about an hour after the troops came to the ford, before they began to cross, and that it was between two and three hours from their first arrival before they were all over. ~~That~~ That they crossed this ford in different ways. In some instances the waggons were drove into the river; behind each other, and the troops passed from one to the other by wading on the tongues. ~~That~~ That Capt'n Driskill came down to the ford, with orders from the Genl to hasten the crossing of the troops, and that Mr Lansing also came and exerted himself in getting them over the river. That after they had all crossed, they were marched with dispatch to the Ferry where they joined the Levies and Indians. That the Genl did there take the command of the whole. That after he had joined, the whole were divided into three columns; the right composed of Levies, (3) and the left and centre of Militia. That the Oneida Indians marched between the left and centre, but sometimes changed their situation. That the troops marched in this order in pursuit (2) of the enemy for some miles. That the centre and left columns were then subdivided, and continued their march. That Colo Harper came to the Genl and advised him that an Oneida Indian had discovered the enemy near at hand on the low grounds. That soon thereafter, the deponent discovered them drawn up in order (4). That the Genl then ordered Mr. Lansing to the right, and deponent to the left. That the firing on the enemy from the advance party of the centre then commenced about (200) two hundred yards distance. That about the same time, Colo Cuyler's Regiment of the left column began to fire on the enemy at about four hundred yards distance. That the Genl desired the deponent to go to the left and ~~order~~ order them to cease firing, and advance toward the enemy (5). That he thereupon went to the left and communicated the Genl's orders, but that it was a considerable time before he could effect it. That that regiment advanced a little, and inclined towards the river when the deponent left it. That Colo Rensselaer's Regt was advanced towards the enemy in an orchard in front of *Klock's House*. That after delivering the orders to Colo Cuyler's Regt, (6) he returned to the Genl, whom he found in the centre, with Colo Rensselaer's & Whiting's regts which were then in the greatest disorder and confu-

sion, and that the Genl did exert himself to get them in order again.

Question by the Court. At what time did the firing commence?

Ans. At about sunset, and continued about thirty minutes.

Quest. by Court. Did the general discover any want of personal bravery and firmness in the action of the day?

Ans. He did not.

Quest. by Court. Was Colo Cuyler's Regt also in disorder and confusion?

Ans. They were.

Quest. by Court. What was the extreme distance between the front and rear of that reg't?

Ans. About two hundred and fifty or three hundred yards.

Quest. by Genl Rensselaer. Did not the rear of the left fire at the same time when the front did?

Ans. They did.

Quest. by Genl Rensselaer. Did you hear the reason assigned for ordering a retreat?

Ans. I did. I think the reason was, that the troops were in such confusion that it would be easy for a small party of the enemy to cut them to pieces.

Quest. by Court. Did the Genl thro' the whole of his march from Schenectady upwards, discover a solicitude to come up with the enemy?

Ans. He even appeared anxious to come up with them?

Quest. by the Court. What was Genl Rensselaer's conduct the day after the action?

Ans. Colo. Dubois with the levies marched in pursuit of the enemy the next morning, and the Genl then ordered some light troops from the regiments of militia who were best able to march, to go as volunteers to overtake Col. Dubois. That the de'pt went accordingly with about thirty volunteers. That on his way, the General with a party of horse (7) passed him at the Castle in the present town of Danube, opposite the mouth of East Canada Creek and that the deponent with his party marched on and scarce came up with the Genl and Colo Dubois at Fort Herkimer. That as soon as the main body of militia came up, the whole force marched in pursuit of the enemy about three or four miles above Fort Herkimer at Shoemakers', where they halted for some time. That a difference of opinion then arose on the route the enemy had taken, and on a consultation of the field officers, the whole of the troops returned to Fort Herkimer, where the Govr took the command.

Quest. by Genl. Rensselaer. Do you not recollect that I sent out three or four Indians to discover the enemy's track?

Ans. I do.

Edward S. Willet, being sworn, says: That on the day of the action of the 19th October last, he was attached to the artillery. That he was at Fort Rensselaer, and afterwards with Genl Rensselaer and Colo Dubois, on the bank of the river at the ferry. That he there received orders from the Genl to go down to the place where the militia were crossing, and desire the officers to hurry on the troops as quick as possible, which he did.

Quest. by Genl Rensselaer. Do you not remember that the artillery and ammunition waggons frequently halted on account of the badness of the roads?

Ans. I do, and particularly at and above Anthony's Nose, where the ammunition wag-

gon was delayed, the horses being much fatigued.

Lient. Garret W. Van Schaick, being sworn says: That he was in the field of action on the 19th Oct. last. That when Colo Cuyler's Regiment, and the other troops were advancing towards the enemy, then yet out of the reach of musket shot, Colo Cuyler's Regt began to fire upon the enemy, and rushed on a few paces, which broke the line or order they were in. That soon after, they were in great disorder and confusion and the deponent saw Genl Rensselaer with them, endeavoring to form them. That the Genl exerted himself greatly on this occasion, but his efforts were fruitless. That the troops were worn down with fatigue occasioned by the long and rapid march and the want of rest the preceding night.

The court adjourned till Tuesday morning, 7 o'clock, March 15th, 1780.—The Court met pursuant to adjournment and adjourned till the 16th at 6 o'clock P. M.

March 16th the Court met.

Colo Samuel Clyde [Canajoharie District Regiment (8) apptd 25 Jan 1778] being sworn, says, That on the day of the action of the 19th October last, he commanded a party of Tryon county militia. That he was at Wolrod's Ferry near Fort Rensselaer at the time when Genl Rensselaer with the militia arrived at Adam Countryman's, about a mile below it. That he crossed the ferry to the north side with the levies and militia, about one o'clock P. M. by Colo Dubois' orders. That he had orders to halt there till Genl Rensselaer should join him. That about three or four hours thereafter, the Genl with his Militia joined the Levies and militia at the ferry, when without the least delay, the whole force marched with the greatest expedition till they came up with the enemy. That the militia commanded by the deponent were attached by the Levies under Colo. Dubois on the right. That the deponent was not informed of the disposition of the other troops, and had no opportunity to observe it, as he marched immediately into the woods on the hill. That the troops marched about four miles, till they had got above Colo Klock's. That he then heard a firing near Klock's House; but that the right continued their march with design to out flank the enemy. That upon finding that the right had got above the enemy, two or three platoons of Levies and Militia were detached (by Maj. Benschoten) from the rear to attack a body of the enemy [Indians] who were posted about one hundred rods above Klock's. That that detachment fired six or seven platoons when the enemy fled, and the troops returned to their post. That the right was then ordered to halt, until Colo Dubois waited on the Genl for orders. That it was then so dark as to render it difficult to enter into action with safety; as it was hardly possible to distinguish our troops and the enemy from one another. That he then observed a cross fire upon the right, from the low lands, which he supposed to have come from the enemy, but that he was the same evening informed by Colo. Dubois that it proceeded from our own troops. That the right remained in that situation for about half an hour. That the enemy could just be discerned and part of them were then heard crossing the river. That the daylight was then in, and the troops received orders to march, and they proceeded towards Klock's House, where they halted a short space of time. That

on hearing the groanings of a man that lay wounded in the field of action, he detached six men to bring him in. That these men with some others, brought in the artillery waggons and artillery [What artillery? Sir John had no artillery, properly speaking] (9) which had been deserted by the enemy. That a report of this matter was sent to Genl Rensselaer, two or three hours after dark. That it was agreed between this deponent and Maj. Benschoten to halt the troops and remain on the ground, where they were, and that soon after, Colo Dubois came to them with orders that they should remain on the ground near Klock's. That he did not hear of any council of war being held, and *a retreat resolved on*. That Colo Dubois informed the deponent and Major Benschoten, that the Genl would be with them in the morning, and that they were to march in pursuit of the enemy. That the Levies under Colo Dubois, and the militia commanded by the deponent, marched accordingly about an hour after sunrise, and before the Genl came up with them. That he heard the Genl lodged at *For's* about three or four miles below Klock's [i. e. down the river]. That Colo Dubois and the deponent, and their troops marched to Fort Herkimer and arrived there about two o'clock, being about eighteen or twenty miles. That about an hour after, they were joined by the general with a party of horse, and that some time thereafter, Major Morris, with a party of militia came up; and that about two hours after the General's arrival they were joined by a body of militia. That then (about four o'clock), all the troops marched from Fort Herkimer (about six miles), to Shoemaker's.

Genl's Question. Do you know the reason of our marching to Shoemaker's?

Ans. The enemy had marched into the woods, and it was supposed they only meant to avoid the little forts which were along the public road, and would come into the road again at Shoemaker's.

Genl's Quest. Did you not hear that we were at a loss to know which way the enemy had gone, and do you not recollect that three Indians were sent out by me to discover their track?

A. I did hear that it was doubtful which route the enemy had taken and that the Indians were sent out.

Quest. Did we remain there that night, or did we return,—and when—and *do you know the reason of our return?*

Ans. We remained there till near dark, and then returned to Fort Herkimer. I do not know the reason why. I heard the scouts had been out and returned, and that they could not discover that the enemy had gone that way.

Quest. Did not the governor [*Clinton*] join us at Fort Herkimer?

Ans. He did, some time in that night.

Quest. Had you on the 19th October from your situation, any opportunity of seeing the confusion that prevailed on our left and centre?

Ans. I had not.

Quest. Do you think it would have been prudent in me, to have engaged the enemy with the party of Levies and Militia who were on the north side of the river, at Wolrod's Ferry, before the militia who were below came up?

Ans. I do not think it would.

[Gen. Rensselaer had over 1500 fresh men with artillery, cocks in their own barn yard, to fight

less than half the number of beaten-out Whites and Indians. In the name of soldiiership how many did he want? and what more odds in his favor? Did he think Sir John a fool to wait for the concentration of the 45 regts of Tryon and the neighboring counties to overwhelm him? Sir John had done his work. Why did not his antagonist do his?]

Quest. by the Court. Did you on the 19th or 20th October, or at any time before, discover any want of personal bravery or firmness in Genl Rensselaer?

Ans. I never did, before, nor did I at any time on those days.

John Lansing, Junr, Esqr, (10) being sworn, says as follows: On the 17th October last, in the afternoon, I accompanied Genl Rensselaer in quality of *Aid-major* from Albany to Schenectady. *The city of Albany militia, and some other regiments* (11) having previously proceeded on their march to that place. We overtook and passed a number of the militia before we arrived at that place, and *Colo Van Alstyne's regt* (12) which had been directed to march by the way of Nestaugna, not having arrived at Schenectady in the evening the general sent an express to him, with orders to hasten his march, so as to be at Schenectady at daybreak next morning. In the mean time, the general having been informed that the enemy *were still burning* in the lower parts of Schoharie, convened some of the principal inhabitants of Schenectady, and advised with them on the practicability of procuring a number of horses and waggons by the next morning, to convey such militia as could be collected, towards the enemy, with the greatest expedition. The attempt was made in the course of the night, but a number very inadequate to the service could only be procured. The issuing commissary was the same evening sent for to inform the general of the state of provisions at Schenectady. It appeared from his information, as I was advised by Genl Rensselaer an hour or two after he was sent for, that there was not a sufficiency of provisions of the meat kind to victual the troops for a day, and a very small quantity of bread. Some cattle arriving destined for the garrison of Fort Schuyler, the general ordered some of them to be killed for the use of the militia. Those were to have been ready at daybreak, but the bread which was ordered to be baked, and the cattle directed to be killed, did not get ready until about nine o'clock in the morning, before which orders were issued to march as soon as the provisions should be received. While we were at Schenectady on the morning of the 18th, Genl Rensselaer wrote a letter, or directed me to write to Colo Staats or Veeder (I can not charge my memory to which) directing him, as nearly as I can recollect, to call upon Major Woolsey, and to *take all the force he could collect from the different posts at Schoharie*, without exposing the forts too much, pursue the enemy, and hang on their rear, avoiding however an engagement, and advising the Genl from time to time, of the route, numbers, and such other particular, respecting the enemy as he could collect. I believe it was between nine and ten o'clock before the militia got in march. They marched on the 18th, as far as Sir William Johnson's old place, on the Mohawk River, which I think I was informed was sixteen miles above Schenectady. We arrived there after it was dark, and took post on a hill. A

council was called by the General as soon as the troops could be properly disposed of, consisting of a number of field officers and the General suggested to them the necessity of taking measures to procure intelligence of the enemy's route. It was agreed to send out a party to make discoveries, and which was accordingly done. The Tughtenunda (Chuctanunda) Hill being covered with woods, and it being very dark, the council agreed in sentiment, that it would be most advisable to remain on the ground on which we then were, till the moon should begin to appear. We accordingly remained I think till some time before the moon rose, when the march was resumed. We arrived at Fort Hunter (I think) about twelve. The militia were directed to cross the Scholarie creek, which was soon effected in a scow and the waggons. I went into the fort with the General, who examined a prisoner that had been taken and brought in, and upon coming out we crossed the creek and found most of the militia on the west side. We then marched on, and I do not recollect that we made any halt after leaving the creek, till we got to Van Ep's where we halted, I think about an hour. Here the General directed me to write Colonel Dubois and Brown, advising them of his situation, and his intentions to pursue the enemy closely, and *to attack them by break of day*. In consequence of these orders, I wrote a letter to Colo Dubois, of which I believe the paper Colo Harper produced to the court is a copy. Another was dispatched to Colo Brown. The Genl received the accounts at Van Ep's, by one Wallace, that the enemy were encamped at Anthony's Nose, on both sides of the river, we continued our march to a field at some distance from the east side of the Nose. It was then some time advanced in the day. Here we halted. The ammunition was inspected, and an additional quantity distributed among the troops. Colonel Louis (13) was sent out to reconnoitre Anthony's Nose, which is a very dangerous defile. Upon his return, and reporting that he had made no discoveries, and after the issues of ammunitions were completed, which might possibly have taken an hour, the militia were ordered on. After proceeding to the west side of the Nose, we discovered a party of about forty of the enemy on the north side of the Mohawk River who were bending their course towards the river. Our advance was then about one quarter of a mile in front of the main body. Capt'n Driskill of the artillery was with a *field piece* (14) with the advance guard. I was directed by the Genl to go on the advance guard and order the officer commanding it, to make proper dispositions to intercept the enemy, should they cross a ford, which it was said was in our front, as the general supposed they mistook our troops for those of the enemy. I rode to the advance, and delivered my orders. They halted for some time, and Capt Driskill upon my returning desired me to beg the general to give the enemy's party a shot or two [very unwise if he wished to overtake and surprise a retreating foe]. When I returned, I communicated Driskill's request. Genl Rensselaer observed to me, our business was not so much to frighten the enemy as to fight them, and that a compliance with Driskill's request would only tend to discover to the enemy that we were in force. We continued marching on, without making any general halt, that I recollect, till

we arrived at the ford, about a mile to the eastward of Fort Rensselaer. The militia stopped here to refresh themselves not having had time to cook their provisions since their leaving Schenectady, *the enemy being then burning from the direction of their fires at Stone Arabia*.

Soon after the halt, Genl Rensselaer went to Fort Rensselaer, to which place I followed him and dined. Immediately after dinner, Genl Rensselaer directed me to go down to the militia and order them across the river as soon as possible. When I came down to the place where they had halted, I found that some had already crossed the river on waggons and others were following their example. But they *went across very tardily*, complaining of being too much harrassed by a forced march, and *many appeared much dispirited on account of Brown's defeat which was generally known among them*.

Imagining that the crossing would be expedited by forming a bridge across the river with our waggons, I suggested it to some of the field officers who agreed with me in sentiment, but the orders given for the execution of this service, were executed *with such reluctance*, that at least two hours elapsed before the militia had crossed, tho' many of the officers exerted themselves to facilitate their conveyance across the river. While the militia were crossing, I received two messages from the General, to push them on with all expedition, which was communicated to the field officers on the ground. In the mean time, *an attempt was made to induce them to ford the river, but proved unavailing*. As soon as they were crossed, they were marched to the place where the levies had crossed the river, and were formed and counted off in sections. The enemy was then about two miles in advance, *burning the buildings as they proceeded*. After we had marched on some distance, the general directed me to write a letter to his Excellency the Governor, advising him that he was near the enemy, and intended to attack as soon as he could overtake them. While I was writing, the disposition of the troops were made for an attack. Upon my overtaking the General, who was *at the head of what I was told was the centre column*, I rode with him some minutes, when he observed to me, that the militia on the left, were *marching on without observing any order*, and directed me to go to them, and order them to march more compactly. I went down and gave the orders to Colo Cuyler and some other officers. Upon my return to the General, I observed a number of men in advance of the centre, as I afterwards found, and upon my taking the shortest route towards them, I found they were Indians. I enquired of one of them whether he had seen the General. He happened not to understand me, and while I was endeavoring to make him understand me the Indians began to fire, and *received a warm one in return*. The first fire my horse felt with me. By this time, the troops in the low ground had commenced a firing *at long shot* from the enemy, *broke, and some ran*. I again made an attempt to mount my horse, but finding that he would not stand fire, I ran down towards the left, one of the militia attending me, and leading my horse, till I came to Van Alstyne's regiment *which was broke*. I assisted in rallying it, which was partly effected. I then went to Colonel Cuyler's and endeavored to assist the officers in rally-

ing that regiment, which was also partly rallied: But part of another regiment (Van Alstyne's I think) firing at Cuyler's they again broke, and could not be rallied.

A similar confusion seemed to prevail in every part of the troops on the left. I did not see Genl Rensselaer after the firing commenced, till it had somewhat subsided, and from the direction of the fire, it appeared that the enemy's had entirely ceased, when he exerted to rally Cuyler's and other regiments on the left.

He observed to me, that the confusion and darkness was such, that it would be imprudent to engage the enemy in the night, and directed me to assist in marching off the troops.

When the firing commenced on our part, the rear of two regiments in the low grounds, were strung along a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards behind the front, and kept up a warm fire, as well as the front, but the direction of the fire seemed to be up in the air. At the time the engagement began it was dark, and in a few minutes it was quite dark, which I believed was occasioned by the smoke from the buildings which were burnt by the enemy. Immediately after the firing on the part of the enemy ceased, I heard several exclamations at different times, by the militia on the low grounds, that they were in danger to be cut to pieces and surrounded by the enemy and many of them expressed a great disposition to run off.

In the evening of the action, I suggested to the general, that the troops were without provisions and I recollect he informed me, that he had ordered the provisions to be over early in the morning, but it did not arrive till after sunrise. In the same evening, the General informed me, that he had given orders to Colo Dubois, for the marching of the Levies in pursuit of the enemy the next morning, by break of day, or before day, (I do not recollect which), and those troops marched accordingly. As soon as the militia had got their provisions and cooked and eat it, they marched also, I think about an hour after sunrise (but this I cannot ascertain with precision.) On the march, the general desired that a small detachment of men of the different regiments who were best able to go on, should turn out as volunteers, to overtake, and who went on to join Colo. Dubois.

If I recollect right, this detachment was made in consequence of intelligence received, that Colo. Dubois was very near the enemy.

The General went on, escorted by a small number of horsemen, to join Colo. Dubois. I followed him, and we arrived at Fort Herkimer about two o'clock. About two hours after, the militia joined us and halted a small space of time. Here the General received intelligence, that the enemy had struck off from the public road to avoid the fort, and had taken the route to Shoemaker's. The General then marched the troops on to near Shoemaker's. It was there become doubtful what route the enemy had taken, and parties of Indians and white men were sent out to discover their track who returned and finally reported that from the observations they could make, the enemy had not gone that way. When the General found that he had mistaken the enemy's route, he ordered the troops to return to fort Herkimer, with intentions (as was said), to fall in with their track, to the southward of Fort Herkimer. It was just dark, when the troops marched from Shoemaker's

towards Fort Herkimer. The next morning the Governor took the command.

Question by the Court. From the whole tenor of Genl Rensselaer's conduct in his march up the Mohawk River, had you reason to suppose that he was anxious to come up with the enemy?

Ans. He appeared to be very much so, in every part of his conduct.

Quest. by Court. Did you, in or before the action of the 19th October, discover any want of firmness, or personal bravery in the general?

Ans. From what I observed of his conduct, before the action, he appeared to possess himself fully, and in the course of that action, or after it he did not betray the least want of resolution or firmness, as far as fell under my observation.

The Court then adjourned till Saturday morning, March 17th, at 7 o'clock.

The court met pursuant to adjournment.

Upon duly considering the proofs and allegations respecting B. Genl. Rensselaer's conduct on the incursions of the enemy into Tryon County, in October last: The court do unanimously report their opinion:

That the whole of General Rensselaer's conduct both before and after, as well as in, the action of the 19th of October last, was not only unexceptionable, but such as became a good, active, faithful, prudent and spirited officer, and that the public clamors raised to his prejudice on that account, are without the least foundation.

JACOBUS SWARTWOUT, Presdt.

His Excellency, GOVERNOR CLINTON.

ENGAGEMENT NEAR FOX'S MILLS.

East Side of Caroga Creek, Where It Empties Into the Mohawk River, Near St. Johnsville, Montgomery Co., N. Y., 63 Miles W. by N. of Albany.

OFTEN STYLED THE BATTLE OF KLOCK'S FIELD.

Sometimes Confounded With That of Stone- Arabia (on or near de Peyster Patent).

19th OCTOBER, 1780.

Of all the engagements which have occurred upon the soil of New York, the "cock-pit," or "the Flanders," of the Colonies, there is none which has been so much misrepresented as this. There is scarcely a word of truth in the narrative generally accepted as history. Envy, hatred, and malice, have painted every picture and even gone so far as to malign the State commander, the scion of a family who risked more than any other for the Commonwealth to conceal and excuse the bad conduct of his troops. As for the leader of the Loyalists it is no wonder that his reputation fared so badly at the hands of a community whom he had made to suffer so severely for their sins against justice, his family connections, friends and himself. The State Brigadier-General has been accused in so many words of inefficiency, cowardice and disloyalty (French G., 432; Stone B., II., 124-5; B. W., II., 126-7; Simm's S. C., 430-1; Campbell's B. W., 199-201), although acquitted by his peers of all three and

highly commended for activity, fidelity, prudence, spirit and conduct. The Royal leader was also subjected to a false accusation of want of courage, on the statement of a personal enemy, and like his antagonist received the highest commendation of his superior, a veteran and proficient.

Before attempting to describe what actually occurred on the date of the collision, a brief introduction is necessary to its comprehension. The distinguished Peter van Schaack (Stone, Sir W. J., II., 388) pronounced Sir William Johnson "THE GREATEST CHARACTER OF THE AGE," the ablest man who figured in our immediate Colonial history. He was certainly the benefactor of Central New York, the protector of its menaced frontier, the first who by a victory stayed the flood-tide of French invasion. His son, Sir John, succeeded to the bulk of his vast possessions in the most troublous times of New York history. He owed everything to the Crown and nothing to the People, and yet the People because he would not betray the trusts which he held from the Crown, drove him forth and despoiled him. More than once he returned in arms to punish and retrieve, at a greater hazard than any to which the mere professional soldier is subjected. By the detestable laws of this embryo State, even a peaceable return subjected him to the risk of a halter; consequently in addition to the ordinary perils of battle, he fought as it were with a rope around his neck. There was no honorable captivity for him. The same pitiless retribution, which, after King's Mountain (S. C.) in the same month and year (7th October, 1780) strung up ten or a dozen Loyalist officers, would have sent him speedily to the scaffold. The coldly cruel or unrelentingly severe—choose between the terms—Governor Clinton would have shown no pity to one who had struck harder and oftener than any other, and left the record of his visitations in letters of fire on vast tablets of ashes coherent with blood.

In 1777, through the battle-plans of Sir John, a majority of the effective manhood of the Mohawk—among these some of his particular persecutors—perished at Oriskany. In 1779, his was the spirit which induced the Indians to make an effort to arrest Sullivan, and it was Sir John, at length interposed between this General and his great objective Niagara (Stone's Brant, II., 36; B. W., II., 38), if it was not the very knowledge that Sir John was concentrating forces in his front caused Sullivan to turn back. In the following Autumn (1779) he made himself master of the key of the "great portage" between Ontario and the Mohawk, and his farther visitation of the valley eastward, was only frustrated by the stormy season on the great lake by which alone he could receive reinforcements and supplies.

In May, 1780, starting from Bulwagga Bay (near Crown Point) on Lake Champlain, he constructed a military road through the wilderness (see page viii. *supra*) of which vestiges are still plainly visible—ascended the Sacondaga, crossed the intervening watershed, and fell (on Sunday night, 21st May) with the suddenness of a waterspout upon his rebellious birthplace, accomplished his purpose, left behind him a dismal testimony of his visitation, and despite the pursuit of aggregated hate and vengeance, escaped with his recovered plate, rich booty and numerous prisoners.

In August-September of the same year, he organized a second expedition at Lachine, (9 miles above Montreal,) ascended the St. Lawrence, crossed Lake Ontario, followed up the course of the Oswego river, coasted the southern shore of Oneida Lake until he reached the mouth of Chittenaug Creek (W. boundary bet. Madison co. and E. of Onondaga co.) where he left his *bateaux* and canoes, struck off southeastward up the Chittenaug, then crossing the Unadilla and the Charlotte, (sometimes called the East branch of the Susquehanna,) and descended in a tempest of flame into the rich settlements along the Schoharie, which he struck at what was known as the Upper Fort, now Fultonham, Schoharie co.

[If the old maps of this then savage country are reliable, he may have crossed from the valley of the Charlotte into that of the Mohawk Branch of the Delaware, or the Papontuck Branch farther east again. From either there was a portage of only a few miles to the Schoharie Kill.]

Thence he wasted the whole of this rich valley to the mouth of this stream, and then turning westward completed the devastation of everything which preceding inroads had spared. (Brant II., 124.) The preliminary circuitous march through natural obstacles apparently insurmountable to an armed force was one of certainly 200 miles. The succeeding sweep

"With steel to the bosom, and flame to the roof," and retreat embraced almost as many. More than one contemporary statement attests that the invasion carried things back to the uncertainties of the old French inroads and reinvested Schenectady with the dangerous honor of being considered again a frontier post. (Hough's Northn. Invn. 131, 144)

The terrifying intelligence of the appearance of this little "army of vengeance" aroused the whole energy of coterminous districts: the militia were assembled in haste, and pushed forward to the point of danger under Brigadier General Robert van Rensselaer of Claverack, (now Columbia Co.) who were guided into the presence of their enemy literally "by pillars of fire by night, and columns of smoke by day." Although he knew that he was pursued by forces treble or quadruple if not quintuple his own, Sir John continued to burn and destroy up to the very hour when his troops were obliged to lay aside the torch to resume their firelocks. In fact if the two engagements of the 19th of October, 1780, were contemplated parts of a combined plan to overwhelm Sir John, he actually fought and burned simultaneously. To whomsoever a contemporaneous map of this country is accessible it will be evident how vast a district was subjected to this war cyclone. On the very day (19th Oct.) that van Rensselaer was at Fort Plain the flourishing settlements of Stone Arabia (Palatine Township, Montgomery Co.) a few miles to the westward, were destroyed. Finding that he must fight either to arrest pursuit or to ensure retreat, Sir John hastily assembled some of his wearied troops, while others kept on burning in every direction, to engage the garrison of Fort Paris—constructed to protect the Stone Arabia settlement (Simm's S. Co., 426)—which marched out to intercept him under Colonel Brown, an officer of undoubted ability and of tried courage. Brown's immediate force consisted of 130 men of the Massachusetts Levies, and a body of militia—70 and upwards—whose num-

bers and co-operation seemed to have been studiously concealed by almost every writer at the period; that there were Militia present is unquestionable. It is almost, if not absolutely certain that Brown marched out of Fort Paris in pursuance of the orders and plan of van Rensselaer, in order to cut Sir John off from his line of retreat, and hold him or "head him" until van Rensselaer could fall upon him with overwhelming numbers. The same failure to co-operate in executing a very sensible piece of strategy sacrificed Herkimer to Sir John at Oriskany, some three years previously, and resulted in a similar catastrophe. To appreciate and to forestall was the immediate and only solution. Sir John attacked Colonel Brown—like "now, on the head" as Suwarrow phrased it—about 9 or 10 A. M., killed him and about 100 of his men, captured several (Hough's N. L. says 40 kd. and 2 pris.) and sent the survivors flying into van Rensselaer's lines to infect them with the terror of the slaughter from which they had just escaped. The Stone Arabia Fight in which Col. Brown fell was only two miles distant from the "Nose," where van Rensselaer's forces had already arrived. They heard the firing just as twilight was melting into night in a valley where the latter prematurely reigned through the masses of smoke from burning buildings which brooded like a black fog, sensible to the touch. Van Rensselaer came upon the position where Sir John had "settled" himself to resist. This term "settled" is most apposite. It recalls a spectacle often visible in our woods when a predatory hawk wearied in its flight settles on a limb to rest and resist a flock of encompassing furious crows whose nests he has just invaded.

To refer back to the darkness occasioned by smoke, it may be necessary to state that the dwellers of cities or old cultivated districts have no conception of the atmospheric disturbance occasioned by extensive conflagrations in a wooded country.

[The dark day in Massachusetts of 19 May, 1780, was due to this cause (Heath 236, '7, '8), when artificial night, culminating about noon, sent the animal creation to roost and repose with less exceptions than during the completest eclipse, and filled the minds of men with apprehension and astonishment. This is not the only "dark day" so recorded. On the 24th October, 1823 at New York candlelight was necessary at 11 A. M. The 16th May, 1780, was another "dark day" in Canada, where similar phenomena were observed 9th, 15th, and 16th Oct. 1785. On the last, "it is said to have been as dark as a dark night." Several other instances are chronicled.]

What is more, the evening air in October, is often heavy through a surcharge of dampness especially along large streams and in bottom lands. To such as can imagine this condition of the atmosphere, it will at once become evident how much it was augmented immediately after a few volleys from about two thousand muskets, the smoke of the conflagrations, and the explosions of the powder, rendering objects invisible almost at arms' length. This is established by the testimony of a gallant American officer, Col. Dubois, (H. 183-5), who stated that shortly after the firing became warm, when within five paces of his general he could only recognize him by his voice. Therefore for anyone to pretend to relate what occurred within the lines of Sir John Johnson (4) xxvi. 2 and (5) xxvi. 2, *supra* a few (15) minutes after volleys had been

exchanged along the whole fronts is simply drawing upon the "imagination for facts." Consequently when the American writers say that the enemy broke and ran, it was simply attributing to them what was occurring within van Rensselaer's lines, where the officers could not restrain the rear from firing over and into the front and from breaking beyond the power of being rallied. Doubtless, as always, the regulars on both sides behaved as well as circumstances permitted. Sir John's Indians opposed to the American Continentals and Levies for the defence of the frontiers, it is very likely gave way almost at once. Brandt, their gallant and able leader, was wounded in the heel, and therefore unable to move about, encourage them and hold them up to their work. Thus crippled he had enough to do to get off, for if taken he well knew that his shift would be short and his "despatch" speedy if not "happy." Sir John was also struck, in the thigh, and was charged with quitting the field. The only evidence for this is derived from one of his bitter personal enemies surcharged with spite and desire of vengeance. How bitterly he felt can be easily conceived, when he turned upon van Rensselaer and emphasized, (Stone's Brant II. 124-5, &c.) Colonel Stone remarks other accounts "speak differently" from Sammons (Brant ii. 122).

Gen. Sir Frederic Haldimand wrote to the home government that Sir John "had destroyed the settlements of Schoharie and Stone Arabia, and laid waste a large extent of country," which was most true. It was added:

"He had several engagements with the enemy, in which he came off victorious. In one of them, near Stone Arabia, he killed a Col. Brown, a notorious and active rebel, with about one hundred officers and men." "I cannot finish without expressing to your Lordship the perfect satisfaction which I have, from the zeal, spirit, and activity with which Sir John Johnson has conducted this arduous enterprise."

Max von Eelking (II. 199-200) in his compilation of contemporaneous observations, presents the following testimony of the judgment and reliability of the superior, Gen. Haldimand, who reported, officially, in such flattering terms of the result of Sir John's expedition. He says of Haldimand that "he passed, according to English ideas, for one of the best and most trustworthy of British generals; had fought with distinction during the Seven Years' War in Germany. * * * He was a man strictly upright, kind-hearted and honorable. * * * Always of a character very formal and punctilious as to etiquette, he was very fastidious in his intercourse and did not easily make new acquaintances. * * * He required continual activity from his subordinates. * * * A Brunswick officer considers him one of the most worthy officers England has ever had. * * * This was about the character of the man to whom now the fate of the Canadas was intrusted by his Britannic Majesty."

It now seems a fitting time to consider the number of the opposing forces engaged. There has been a studied attempt to appreciate those present under Sir John and to depreciate those at the disposal of van Rensselaer. The same holds good with regard to the losses of the former; whereas the casualties suffered by the latter are studiously concealed. No two works agree in regard to the column led by Johnson. It has been

estimated even as high as 1500, whereas a critical examination of its component parts demonstrates that it could not have comprised much more than a third of this number at the outset. As all Sir John's papers were lost in the Egyptian darkness of the night of the 19th October, it is necessary to fall back upon contemporaneous works for every detail.

The product of this calculation exactly agrees with the statement embodied in the testimony of Colonel Harper:—"The enemy's force was about 400 white men and but few Indians." ((1) xxii. *supra*). The post from Albany, 18th October, reported that Sir John's party were "said to be about 500 men come down the Mohawk River." (H. N. I. 122).

When Sir John struck the Charlotte or Eastern Susquehanna he was joined by several hundred Indians. But a quarrel founded on jealousy—similar to such as was the cause of every Aggregation of Scottish Highland tribes, even under Montrose, Claverhouse and the Pretender—soon after occurred, and several hundreds abandoned him.* (Simm's S. Co., 399).

Great stress has also been laid on his being provided with artillery. Close study explodes this phantasy likewise. That he had several pieces of very light artillery hardly deserving

the name with him as far as Chittenango Creek is true (Hammond's Madison Co., 656). Two of these he sunk intentionally in this stream, or else they went to its bottom accidentally. Thence he carried on two little 45^{lb} pounder mortars, probably "Royals," and a Grasshopper 3 pounder. As our army were well acquainted with the improved Colburns used at the siege of Petersburg, it is unnecessary to explain that they were utterly impotent against stone buildings or even those constructed of heavy logs. The Colburns of 1780 was just what St Leger reported of them in 1777—that they were good for "teazing" and nothing more. Even one of these Sir John submerged in a marsh after his attempt upon the Middle Fort, now Middleburg. Clinton, (157,) wrote that both were "concealed [abandoned] by the Loyalists on their route from Schoharie."

Most likely it was an impediment. And nothing is afterwards mentioned of the use of the other. The "grasshopper" 3 *pdr* derived its name from the fact that it was not mounted upon wheels but upon iron legs. It was one of those almost useless little guns which were transported on bat-horses, just as 12 *pdr* mountain howitzers are still carried on pack animals. As Sir John's horses, draught and

* The actual composition of Sir John Johnson's expeditionary column is well-known however often willfully misstated. He had Three Companies of his own Regiment of "Royal Greens" or "Loyal New Yorkers;" one Company of German Jagers; one Company of British Regulars belonging to the 8th (Col. A. S. de Peyster's) King's Regiment of Foot, which performed duty by detachments all along the frontier from Montreal to the farthest west, and in every raid and hostile movement—besides detachments, a Company or Platoon from the 20th, and (2) also from the 33th British Infantry, and a detachment—sometimes rated by the Americans as high as two hundred men—from Butler's Loyalist or Tory Rangers. Sir John in his report of casualties mentions these all except the 20th Regiment and no others. Figure this up, and take sixty at a fair allowance for the numerical force of a company which is too large an allowance basing it on the average strength of British regiments which had seen active service for any length of time on this continent, and six times sixty makes three hundred and sixty, plus two hundred, gives five hundred and sixty; deduct a fair percentage for the footsore and other casualties inseparable from such service, and it reduces his Whites down to exactly what Colonel Harper ((1) xxii. *supra*.) states was reported to him by an Indian as being at Klock's Field.

Col. W. L. Stone (Brant H. 105) specifies three companies of Sir John's own Regiment of Greens; one Company of German Jagers; a detachment of 200 men (doubtful authority cited) from Butler's Rangers; and one (only one) Company of British Regulars. The Indian portion of this expedition was chiefly collected under Brant, at Tioga Point, on the Susquehanna, which they ascended to Unadilla. Stone's language "besides Mohawks" is ambiguous. Sir John had few Indians left—as was usually the case with these savages—when they had "to face the music."

Governor Clinton (Hough N. L. 151) estimates Sir John's force at seven hundred and fifty picked troops and Indians. Very few Indians were in the fight of the 19th of October P. M. Other corroborations have already been adduced. Simm's (S. Co. 399) says that Sir John left Niagara with five hundred British, Loyalist and German troops, and that he was joined by a large body of Indians and Tories under Captain Brant, on the Susquehanna, making his effective force "as estimated at the several forts," one thousand men. By crediting this estimate to the several forts who were "panic-y" renders its correctness unworthy of acceptance. He then

goes on to say that several hundred Indians deserted.

The strength of Regiments varied from three hundred and under to six hundred and fifty. It is well known that some American regiments scarcely rose above one hundred rank and file. It is almost unanimously conceded that Hardheimer had at least four regiments—if not five—the whole comprising only eight or nine hundred men at Oriskany. This does not include Volunteers, Indians, &c., &c.

General van Rensselaer, judging from the testimony given before the Court of Enquiry, and his own letters, Simm's (25 &c.) had seven to nine hundred militia when he reached Schmeckedy. It is very hard to calculate his ultimate aggregate of militia. He had at first his own Claverack Brigade, *The City of Albany Militia and some other Regiments* had preceded him. ((10) & (11.) xxviii.) Col. Van Alstyne's Regiment joined him by another route (*Ibid* (12)). How did Col. Cuyler's Albany Regt. (*Ibid* (6)) come up? Col. Clyde reinforced him with the Canajoharie District Regiment (*Ibid* (8)) (Tryon Co. for military purposes was divided into Districts each of which furnished its quota, likewise (Simm's S. Co 125) "the Schoharie militia" "near Fort Hunter." This dissection might be followed out further to magnify the American force and show against what tremendous odds Sir John presented an undaunted front and what numbers he shocked, repulsed and foiled. He was afterwards joined by the Continental Infantry under Colonel Morgan Lewis; the New York quasi-regulars or Levies, three or four hundred, under Colonel Dubois; McKean's volunteers, sixty; the Indians under Colonel Louis, sixty; John Ostrom, a soldier present, adds (Simm's S. Co 124) 200 Oneida Indians under Col. Harper, the Artillery and the Horse. The militia of Albany county were organized into seventeen regiments, of Charlotte Co. into one; of Tryon Co. into five; besides these there were other troops at hand under different names and peculiarities of service. It is certain that all the militia of Albany, Charlotte and Tryon counties and every other organization that were accessible were hurried to meet Sir John; and severe Clinton was not the man to brook shirking. Twenty-three regiments of militia *must* have produced twenty-four hundred men,—a ridiculously small figure. Add the other troops known to be with van Rensselaer and he faced the Loyal leader with five or six times as many as the latter had; or else the Claverack Brigadier had with him only a startling redundancy of field officers and a disgraceful deficiency of rank and file.

beef cattle, appear to have been stampeded in the confusion of the intense darkness, almost everything which was not upon his soldiers' persons or had not been sent forward when he "settled" at Klock's Field to check pursuit, had to be left when he drew off. The darkness of the night, as stated, was intensified by the powder smoke and smoke of burning buildings, and the bottom fog which filled the whole valley. Under such circumstances small objects could not be recovered in the hurry of a march.

The Americans made a great flourish over the capture of Sir John's artillery. The original report was comparatively lengthy, but simply covered the little "grasshopper," fifty-three rounds of ammunition, and a few necessary implements and equipments for a piece, the whole susceptible of transport on two pack-saddles. Most probably the bat-horses were shot or disabled in the melee. (¶ xxviii. *supra*.)

It is even more difficult to arrive at van Rensselaer's numbers. The lowest figure when at Schenectady is 700. This perhaps indicated his own Chaverack (now Columbia Co.) Brigade. He received several accessions of force, Tryon and Albany county militia; the different colonels and their regiments are especially mentioned besides the *quasi*-regular command—300 or 400 (Hough 150)—of Colonel Dubois' Levies raised and expressly maintained for the defence of the N. Y. northern frontier; Capt. McKean's 80 Independent Volunteers; 60 to 100 Indians, Oneida warriors, under Colonel Louis; a detachment of regular Infantry under Colonel Morgan Lewis, who led the advance (B. II., 120); a company or detachment of artillery with two 9 *pdrs.*; (¶ xxvi. 2) and a body of horsemen. (See *supra* (¶ xxvi. 2).)

Col. Stone, writing previous to 1838, says: "The command of Gen. Van Rensselaer numbered about 1500"—a force in every way superior to that of the enemy. It is very probable that he had over 2000, if not many more than this. Stone adds (Brant, II., 119): "Sir John's troops, moreover, were *exhausted* by forced marches, active service, and heavy knapsacks, while those of Van Rensselaer were fresh in the field." Sir John's troops had good reason to be exhausted. Besides their march from Canaseraga, 150 miles, they had been moving, destroying, and fighting, constantly, for three or four days, covering in this exhaustive work a distance of over 75 (26 m. straight) miles in the Mohawk Valley alone (Hough, 152). On the very day of the main engagement they had wasted the whole district of Stone Arabia, destroyed Brown's command in a spirited attempt to hold the invaders, and actually advanced to meet van Rensselaer by the light of the conflagrations they kindled as they marched along. Each British and Loyal soldier carried eighty rounds of ammunition, which, together with his heavy arms, equipments, rations and plunder, must have weighed one hundred pounds and upwards per man. Van Rensselaer's militia complained of fatigue; but when did this sort of troops ever march even the shortest testing distance without grumbling?

The Americans figured out Sir John's loss at 9 killed, 7 wounded, and 53 missing. His report to General Haldimand states that throughout his *whole* expedition he only lost in killed, Whites and Indians, 9; wounded, 7; and missing 48, which must have included the wounded who had to be abandoned; and de-

sections 3; the last item is the most remarkable in its insignificance. (H. N. I., 136.)

How the troops on either side were drawn up for the fight appears to have been pretty well settled, for there was still light enough to make this out if no more. Sir John's line extended from the river to the orchard near Klock's house. His Rangers—Loyalists—were on the right, with their right on the bank of the Mohawk. His regular troops stood in column in the centre on the Flats. Brant's Indians and the Hesse-Hanau Riflemen or Jagers were on the left, in echelon, in advance of the rest about one hundred and fifty yards, in the Orchard. Van Rensselaer's forces were disposed: Colonel Dubois with the Levies quasi-regulars on the right, Whites and Indians constituting the central column, and the Albany Militia on the left. (Simms S. Co: 430.) Not a single witness shows where the Continentals, Artillerymen and the Horsemen took position. As for the two 9 *pdr* fieldpieces, they were left behind, stuck in the mud. It was a *tahu-hoku*. The regulars on both sides behaved well as they always do. With the first shots the militia began to fire—Cuyler's Regt. 400 yards away from the enemy—the rear rank over and into those in front, 250 to 300 yards in advance (192), then broke; all was confusion. It does not appear that the American Indians accomplished anything. Colonel Dubois' New York Levies ran out Brant's Indians and got in the rear of Sir John's line, and then there was an end of the matter. (Simms S. Co. 429-30.) It had become so dark from various causes, that, to use a common expression, "a man could not see his hand before his face."

Van Rensselaer had now enough to do to keep the majority of his troops together, and retreated from one and a half to three miles to a cleared hill where he was enabled to restore some order. The stories of the disorder within Sir John's lines, except as regarded the Indians, are all founded on unreliable data; nothing is known. When his antagonist fell back he waited apparently until the moon rose, and then (or previously) forded the river (just above Nathan Christie's—(Simms, 430) and commenced his retreat which he was permitted to continue unmolested. He had fought a Cumberland Church Fight to check pursuit, and there was no Humphreys present to renew it and press on to an Appomattox Court House. He had accomplished his task; he had completed the work of destruction in the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys. There was nothing more to be wasted Colonel Stone sums it up thus (Brandt, II.—124): "By this third and most formidable irruption into the Mohawk country during the season, Sir John had completed its entire destruction above Schenectady—the principal settlement above the Little Falls having been sacked and burned two years before." French observed that these incursions left "the remaining citizens, stripped of almost everything except the soil."

[*The forces of Col. [Sir John] Johnson, a part of which had crossed the river near Caughnawaga, destroyed all the Whig property, not only on the south, but on the north side, from Fort Hunter to the [Anthony's N. T. 60.] Nose; [some 23 to 25 m.] and in several instances where dwellings had been burned by the Indians under his command in May [1780] and temporary ones rebuilt, they were also consumed. * * * After Brown fell, the enemy, scattered in small bodies, were to be

seen in every direction, plundering and burning the settlements in Stone Arabia. In the afternoon Gen. van Rensselaer, after being warmly censured for his delay by Col. Harper and several other officers, crossed the river at Fort Plain, and began the pursuit in earnest. The enemy were overtaken [awaited him] on the side of the river above St. Johnsville, near a stockade and block-house at Klock's, just before night, and a smart brush took place between the British troops and the Americans under Col. DuBoise; in which, several on each side were killed or wounded. Johnson was compelled to retreat to a peninsula in the river, where he encamped with his men much wearied. His situation was such that he could have been taken with ease. Col. DuBoise, with a body of Levies, took a station above him to prevent his proceeding up the river; Gen. van Rensselaer, with the main army, below; while Col. Harper, with the Oneida Indians, *gained a position on the south side of the river, nearly opposite.* [Why did they not guard the Ford by which Sir John crossed? They were afraid of him and glad to let him go if he only *would go away.*] The general gave express orders that the attack should be renewed by the troops under his own immediate command, at the rising of the [full?] [between 10 and 11 P. M. (?) (H. N. I. 55.)] moon, some hour in the night. Instead, however, of encamping on the ground from which the enemy had been driven, as a brave officer would have done, *he fell back down the river and encamped THREE MILES distant.* The troops under DuBoise and Harper could hardly be restrained from commencing the attack long before the moon arose; but when it did, they waited with almost breathless anxiety to hear the rattle of van Rensselaer's musketry. The enemy, who encamped on lands owned by the late Judge Jacob G. Klock, spiked their cannon [the diminutive 3 pdr grasshopper was all they had] which was there abandoned; *and soon after the moon appeared, began to move forward to a fording place just above the residence of Nathan Christie, and not far from their encampment.* Many were the denunciations made by the men under DuBoise and Harper against van Rensselaer, when they found he did not begin the attack, and had given strict orders that their commanders should not. They openly stigmatised the general as a *coward and traitor*; but when several hours had elapsed, and he had not yet made his appearance, a murmur of discontent pervaded all. Harper and DuBoise were compelled to see the troops under Johnson and Brant ford the river, and pass off *unmolested*, or disobey the orders of their commander, when they could, *unaided*, have given them most advantageous battle. Had those brave colonels, at the moment the enemy were *in the river*, taken the responsibility of disobeying their commander as Murphy had done three days before, and commenced the attack in front and rear, the consequences must have been very fatal to the retreating army, and the death of Col. Brown and his men promptly revenged. —Jacob Becker, a Schoharie militia man. 428-430 JEPHIA R. SIMMS' "History of Schoharie Co.," 1845.]

The most curious thing in this connection is the part played by the fiery Governor Clinton. Colonel Stone expressly stated, in 1838, that he was with General van Rensselaer a

few hours before the fight, dined with him at Fort Plain, and remained at the Fort when van Rensselaer marched out to the fight. In his, or his son or namesake's, "Border Wars," 11—122, this statement is repeated. Clinton, in one of his letters, dated 30th October, does not make the matter clear. He says (H. 151) "On receiving this intelligence [the movements of the British] I immediately moved up the river, in hopes of being able to gain their front, etc.:" In describing the engagement he says, "the night came on too soon for us;" and then afterwards he mentions "the morning after the action, I arrived with the militia under my immediate command." This does not disprove Stone's account. Aid-Major Lansing, testified before the court-martial that the Governor took command on the morning of the 21st. It is not likely that Governor Clinton would have found it pleasant to fall into hands of Sir John, and Sir John would have been in a decidedly disagreeable position if the Governor could have laid hands upon him. There was this difference, however; Sir John was in the fight, (Colonel DuBois wrote 11 A. M., the day after the fight, (Hough, N. 1. 118). Prisoners say Sir John was wounded through the thigh,) which he might have avoided; and the Governor might have been (had he "hankered" for the opportunity), and was not. Anyone who will consider the matter dispassionately will perceive that now that the whole country was aroused and all the able-bodied males, regulars and militia, concentrating upon him, Sir John had simply to look to the safety of his command. He retreated by a route parallel to the Mohawk River and to the south of it, passed the Oneida Castle on the creek of the same name, the present boundary between Madison and Oneida counties, and made for Canaseraga where he had left his *balconce*. Meanwhile van Rensselaer had despatched an express to Fort Schuyler or Stanwix, now Rome, ordering Captain Vrooman with a strong detachment from the garrison to push on ahead as quickly as possible and destroy Sir John's little flotilla: A deserter frustrated Burgoyne's last and best chance to escape. Two Oneida Indians, always unreliable in this war, revealed the approach of Sir John and by alarming saved the forts in the Schoharie valley. And now another such chance enabled Sir John to save his boats and punish the attempt made to destroy them. One of Captain Vrooman's men fell sick or pretended to fall sick at Oneida Castle (Hist. Madison, 656, &c.) and was left behind. Soon after, Sir John arrived, and learned, from the invalid, the whole plan. Thereupon he sent forward Brant and his Indians with a detachment of Butler's Rangers, who came upon Vrooman's detachment taking their mid-day meal, and "gobbled" the whole party. Not a shot was fired; and Captain Vrooman and his men were carried off prisoners in the very boats they were dispatched to destroy.

If any reader supposes that this invasion of Sir John Johnson's was a simple predatory expedition, it has been kept in ignorance of the truth through the misrepresentations of American writers. It was their purpose to malign Sir John, and they have admirably succeeded in doing so. Sir John Johnson's expedition was a part of a grand strategic plan, based upon the topography of the country which rendered certain lines of operation

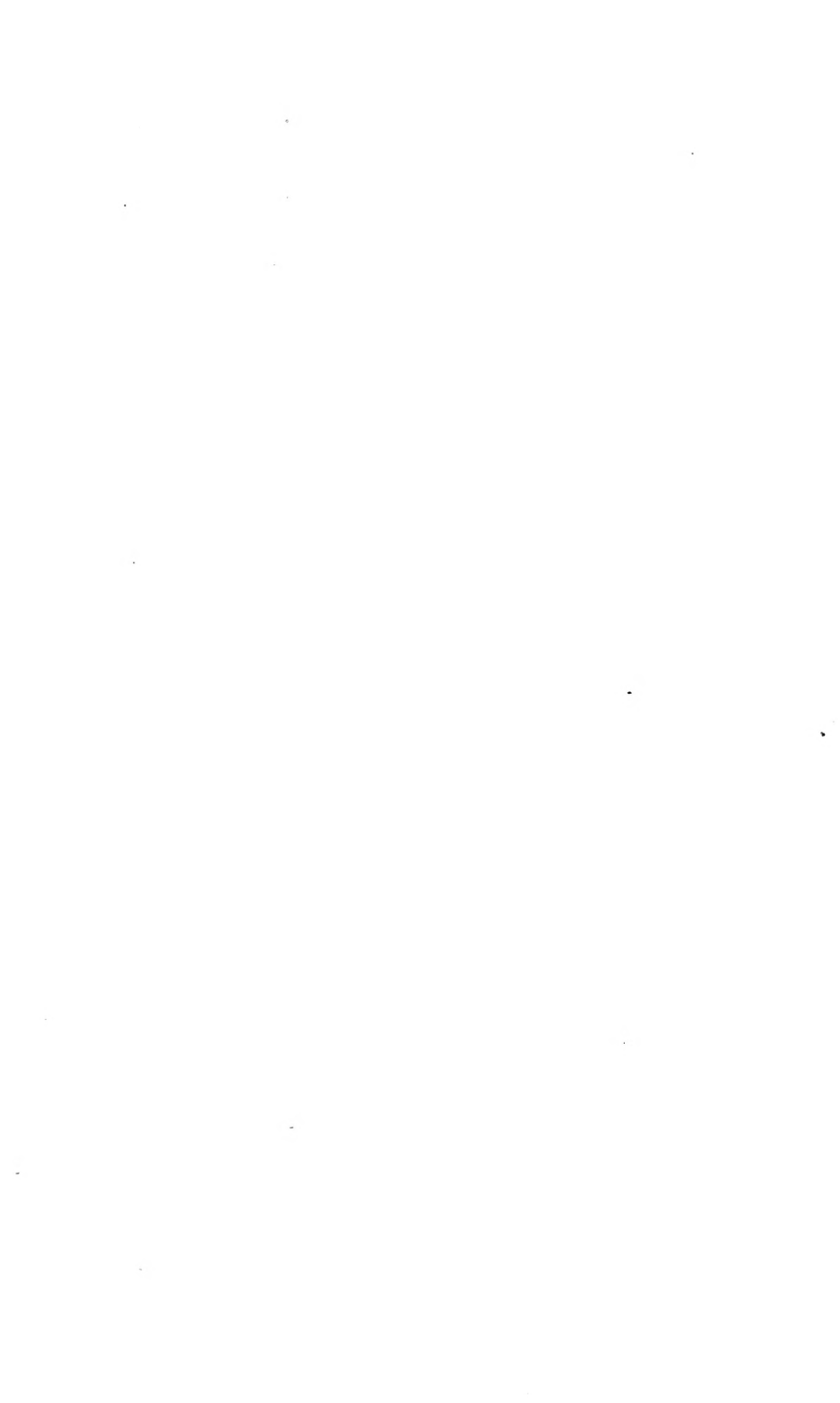
inevitable. Ever since the English built a fort at Oswego, as a menace to the French then in possession of Canada, this port and Niagara were bases for hostile movements against Canada. Pitt's great plan, the conquest of New France in 1759, contemplated a triple attack: down Lake Champlain, across from Oswego, and up the St. Lawrence. The Burgoyne campaign in 1777, was predicated on the same idea: Burgoyne up Champlain, St. Leger from Oswego down the Mohawk, and Howe up the Hudson. Clinton's plan for the fall of 1780, was almost identical; although everything hinged on the success of Arnold's treason and his delivering up West Point. Clinton himself was to play the part Howe should have done and ascend the Hudson. Colonel Carleton was to imitate Burgoyne on a smaller scale and move up Champlain to attract attention in that direction; and Sir John was to repeat the St. Leger movement of 1777, and invade the Mohawk valley. Arnold's failure frustrated Clinton's movement. Carleton at best was to demonstrate because the ambiguity (or consistent treason) of Vermont rendered a more numerous column unnecessary. As it was he penetrated to the Hudson and took Fort Anne. Haldimand's nervousness about a French attack upon Canada, made him timid about detaching a sufficient force with Sir John. Moreover the British regulars were very unwilling to accompany this bold partisan, whose energy insured enormous hardship, labor, and suffering, to his followers, to which regulars, more particularly German mercenaries were especially averse. Von Eckling informs us of this, and furthermore that a terrible mutiny came very near breaking out among the British troops under Johnson in the succeeding June, when Haldimand proposed to send Sir John on another expedition against Pittsburg. The plan of the mutineers (Von E. II, 197) was to fall upon the British officers in their quarters and murder them all. The plot was discovered, but it was politic to hush the whole matter up, which was accordingly done. Doubtless there was hanging and shooting and punishment enough, but it was inflicted quietly. These were the reasons that the invasion which was to have been headed by Sir John Johnson was converted into a destructive raid, and this explains why Sir John was so weak-handed that he could not dispose of VAN RENSSELAER ON KLOCK'S FIELD as completely as he annihilated the gallant BROWN IN STONE ARABIA.

Finally to divest Sir John Johnson's expedition of the character of a mere raid, it is only necessary to compare some dates. Arnold's negotiations with Sir Henry Clinton, came to a head about the middle of September. It was not settled until the 21st-22nd of that month. It is not consistent with probability that Haldimand in Canada was ignorant that a combined movement was contemplated. To justify this conclusion von Eckling states (II, 195) that three expeditions, with distant objectives, started from Quebec about the "middle of September," the very time when Clinton and Arnold were concluding their bargain: the first under Sir John Johnson, into the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys; the second under Major Carleton, which took Forts Anne and George, towards Albany; and the third under Colonel Carleton reversing the direction of the route followed by Arnold in 1777.

The time necessary to bring Sir John into Middle New York, making due allowances for obstacles, was about coincident with the date calculated for the surrender of West Point. Arnold made his escape on the 25th of September. Andre was arrested on the 23rd of September, and was executed on the 2nd of October following. Major Carleton came up Lake Champlain and appeared before Fort Ann on the 10th of October (H. N. I., 43). Major Houghton (Ibid 146) simultaneously fell upon the appertinentments of the Connecticut Valley; and Major Munro, a Loyalist, started with the intention—it is believed—of surprising Schenectady, but for reasons now unknown stopped short at Ballston, attacked this settlement on the midnight of the 16th of October, and then retired carrying off a number of prisoners. Such a coimidence of concentrating attacks from four or five different quarters by as many different routes, could not have been the result of accident. Circumstances indicate that Sir Henry Clinton was first to move in force upon West Point, and make himself master of it through the treasonable dispositions of Arnold. This would have rivetted the attention of the whole country. Troops would have been hurried from all quarters towards the Highlands, and the whole territory around Albany denuded of defenders. Thus it was expected that Sir John would have solved the problem which St. Leger failed to do in 1777. Meanwhile, the Carletons, certain of the neutrality of Vermont, whose hostilities had been so effective, in 1777, would have captured all the posts on the Upper Hudson. In this way the great plan which failed in 1777, was to be accomplished in 1780. Thousands of timid Loyalists would have sprung to arms to support Sir John and Clinton, and the severance of the Eastern from the Middle States, completed and perfect communication established between New York and Montreal. It would have taken but very little time for Clinton to double his force from Loyal elements along the whole course of the Hudson; as can be demonstrated from records, admissions and letters of the times. The majority of the people were tired of the war, and even Washington despaired. On the 11th Oct., 1780, Gov. Clinton wrote to Gen. Washington: "*This enterprise of the enemy (SIR JOHN JOHNSON) is probably the effect of Arnold's treason.*" On the 21st of the same month Gen. Washington addressing the President of the Continental Congress, wrote: "*It is thought, and perhaps not without foundation, that this invasion was made (by SIR JOHN JOHNSON) upon the supposition that Arnold's treachery had succeeded.*"

If Arnold's treason had not been discovered in time, the name of Sir John Johnson might stand to day in history in the same class beside that of Wolfe, instead of being branded as it has been by virulence, and worse, in many cases direct falsehood.

"Success is the test of merit," said the unfortunate Rebel General Albert Sydney Johnston;—"a hard rule," he added, "but a just one." It is both *hard* and *exact*, and were courage, merit, self devotion and exposure to suffering and peril the test, and—*or success*, there are few men who would stand higher to-day in military annals than the vilified SIR JOHN JOHNSON.





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